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# THE INDEPENDENT

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Mick Jagger on stage last night at Soldiers Field, Chicago, during the first performance of the Rolling Stones' year-long tour. Our Arts News Editor, David Lister, says that the world's greatest, longest-running rock'n'roll band very nearly failed to pull it off. 'Things were looking definitely dodgy for the first third of the show. The mustard seemed distinctly uncuttable. Satisfaction, definitely not got.' But it worked out in the end. See the Eye, pages 2 and 3, for the full story. Photograph: Sue Ogrocki/Reuters

## TODAY'S NEWS

### Lawyers wrestle over Saudi nurses' fate

Lawyers are battling over blood money to prevent the beheading of Deborah Parry, one of the two nurses sentenced for murder in Saudi Arabia. A Saudi lawyer representing the families of the nurses said the brother of the victim had agreed a deal, although there was confusion last night over whether it had actually been signed. Page 3

### \$9bn Salomon deal

Salomon Brothers, the investment bank that Tom Wolfe used as the model for his picaresque 1980s morality tale *Bonfire of the Vanities*, was bought yesterday by Travelers Group for a distinctly uncool \$9bn. The New York deal took London completely by surprise. It also sent shock waves through Wall Street, where Deryck Maughan, the new co-chief executive, is known as "Mr Integrity", and the model for Wolfe's "Masters of the Universe". Page 27

### Keegan returns

An announcement is expected today that Kevin Keegan, known to Georgie fans as "the messiah", will return to football as chief executive of Fulham. Mohamed Al Fayed, the club's owner, wants to turn it into the "Manchester United of the south". Page 18

### SEEN & HEARD

An alcoholic did not know he had carried out a robbery until he saw himself on a security video tape on television. Belfast Crown Court heard yesterday. William Nixon, 36, of Disraeli Street, Belfast, immediately surrendered himself to police and admitted robbing a filling station in Carrickfergus several weeks earlier. He pleaded guilty to robbing £250 from two women assistants using an imitation firearm. Terence Mooney QC, defending, said Nixon, who was jailed for two-and-a-half years, had already spent his benefit cheque on drink, and could be seen staggering during the crime. He left the shop saying "all the best" - and spent the proceeds on drink.

## Pollution deaths herald disaster in the making

**An air pollution disaster of unprecedented breadth is unfolding in South-east Asia, caused by a combination of drought, the deliberate burning of land and explosive economic growth. Richard Lloyd Parry and Nicholas Schon predict that it may be the shape of worse things to come.**

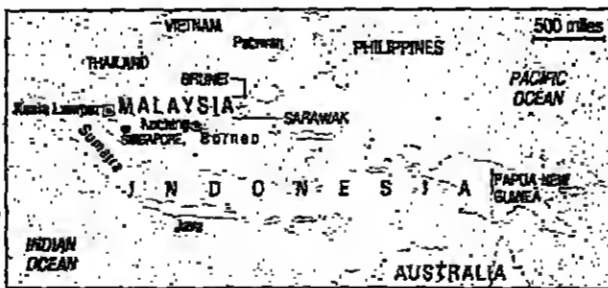
People in South-east Asia are dying, and tens of thousands are suffering from breathing difficulties and illness caused by smog which has reached record levels and spread uncontrollably across six countries. Across huge areas of the Malaysian peninsula and the islands of Borneo and Sumatra the sun has been blocked out.

Three separate environmental problems, each serious in its own right, have combined to create an air-quality disaster on a huge scale. Suddenly, pollution has transformed itself from an irritating side-effect of rapid economic growth to a threat to an entire region's economy and public health.

The initial cause of the smog was the uncontrolled burning of brushwood and forests in parts of Indonesia and Malaysia, started by small farmers and plantation owners wanting to clear land.

The third factor is the high levels of pollution in many of the region's towns and cities caused by fast-growing road traffic, fossil fuel power stations and industry operating with few pollution controls.

A senior Indonesian official admitted yesterday that two place roughly every five years. The latest El Nino, which began six months ago, is particularly severe and may turn out to be the most destructive this century. Some climate scientists say that man-made global warming, caused by the burning of fossil fuels, is making the fluctuations more severe.



people had already died, and that more than 32,000 were afflicted with respiratory illness caused by the smog. Many more deaths are anticipated.

In Kuching, in the Malaysian province of Sarawak, schools, offices, factories and the international airport have been closed and a state of emergency has been declared after daytime visibility was reduced to a few yards. An Air Pollutant Index (API) of between 100 and 200 is considered "unhealthy", while anything between 300 and 500 is "hazardous". In Kuching, it was 651 yesterday, down from a record 839 on Tuesday.

In Sarawak, about 5,000 people are reported to be turning up at local hospitals every day, complaining of respiratory problems, and there has been panic buying of food and water supplies in anticipation of a possible evacuation.

In the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur, 75 US embassy staff and their families have been allowed to leave if they feel ill-effects from the smog. Those who remain will be rotated in and out of the country "to minimise any possible health effects".

The smog already covers most of Malaysia, Brunei, and

ately needed, to douse the flames and wash out the smog. The use of cloud-seeding planes to create rain has made a small difference over Kuala Lumpur, and the Malaysian government says it is now studying plans to spray water from the top of tall buildings to dissolve some of the pollutants.

The region's leaders have plenty else to preoccupy them, including a financial crisis which has caused their currencies and the stock exchange to plummet in value.

Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim, attending the World Bank and International Monetary Fund meeting in Hong Kong, said foreign fund managers had expressed worries about the smog affecting the already unstable financial markets.

Hundreds of cities and towns in developing countries now suffer pollution levels which are as bad or worse than the lethal "pea-souper" smogs that London and other big Western cities suffered before the 1960s. Millions of lives are shortened by heart and lung disease as a result.

While some developing countries, such as Mexico, have begun strenuous efforts to curb their pollution problems, the disaster in South-east Asia shows that air quality is now a cross-border problem.

Countries in South-east Asia will have to co-operate and sign treaties to cut the overall burden of pollution and clean the air, as has been done in North America and Europe. Even Singapore, with relatively low pollution levels of its own and an income level higher than that of the UK, has been unable to escape the fall-out.

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WEATHER The Eye, page 10  
TELEVISION The Eye, page 12  
CROSSWORDS Page 32 and the Eye, page 9

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# 2/BRIEFING

## INDEX

### 5/HEALTH NEWS

A new birth-counselling organisation to rival the National Childbirth Trust is launched today.

### 6/LIB DEM CONFERENCE

### 7/MEDIA NEWS

Private Eye readers have rallied to safeguard the finances of the satirical magazine after big newsagents banned it for publishing articles deemed inappropriate in the wake of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

### 8/NEWS

Ministers have agreed that the annual change of number plates for cars will now take place twice a year, in spring and autumn.

### 13/EDUCATION NEWS

France is to crack down on brutal initiation ceremonies at the country's most prestigious schools as tales of torture and sexual assault embarrass head teachers.

### 15/CULTURE

A West Country businessman has caused a storm by trying to patent the name of St Boniface, a local Saxon monk. He may well make a fortune since Boniface could become the patron saint of Europe.

### 16/SUICIDE BOMBERS

The Israelis have sealed off the village they believe to be the home of four suicide bombers who killed 20 people in Jerusalem. Patrick Cockburn evaded the Israeli security ring in search of the bombers' families.

### EYE ON FRIDAY

Nastassia Kinski: A sex goddess grows up

U2 on tour in Sarajevo: A report from the front-line

King Lear: First night



### TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.166	Italy (lira)	2742
Austria (schillings)	19.66	Japan (yen)	191.88
Belgium (francs)	57.82	Malta (pounds)	0.614
Canada (\$)	2.188	Netherlands (guilder)	3.148
Cyprus (pounds)	0.823	Norway (kroner)	11.39
Denmark (kroner)	10.73	Portugal (escudos)	282.8
France (francs)	9.406	Spain (pesetas)	235.45
Germany (marks)	2.81	Sweden (kroner)	11.97
Greece (drachmas)	445.64	Switzerland (francs)	2.309
Hong Kong (\$)	12.11	Turkey (lira)	2674.46
Ireland (pounds)	1.069	USA (\$)	1.5769

Source: Thomson Cook

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## PEOPLE



### Woman footballer 'humiliated' in a male world

The male-dominated world of football came under fire for alleged sex discrimination yesterday as the Football Association faced its first industrial tribunal complaint from would-be coach Vanessa Hardwick. The 32-year-old PE teacher was refused an advanced coaching licence at the end of a course, but claims that former players from clubs like Liverpool and West Ham passed despite getting worse marks. She launched the potentially mould-breaking complaint after FA assessors branded her coaching skills "naïve and schoolboy-like."

Miss Hardwick, from Ickenham, west London, is only one of three women to hold an intermediate licence. She is an FA county coach for Berkshire and Buckinghamshire and plays for Burnham Ladies.

She needs an advanced licence to coach at the highest level, and wants to work in the US. "It's a male world dominated by men telling male jokes and I was excluded," she told the London North industrial tribunal yesterday on the opening day of the Equal Opportunities Commission-backed case. "I felt and still feel humiliated by the failure. The

worst thing is the lack of women coaches and the state of the women's game."

Elizabeth Slade, counsel for the FA, told the tribunal: "Those who go on this course want to coach football at a very high level. That includes coaching in the Premiership and for a national team. In order to obtain that licence, the highest standard of skill in practice needs to be demonstrated."

Kamesh Bahl, the EOC's chairwoman, said: "We want to see fair play. We want women to have the same opportunity to participate in sport as men."

Miss Hardwick told the tribunal that the course damaged her self-esteem and confidence. "The course was physically and emotionally demanding and not being one of the boys made it more intimidating and stressful - not being in with imbeciles and jokes. The case is the second involving football. In 1995 the EOC backed a successful claim by Georgina Christoforou, who wanted to become an assistant referee, against the South East Counties Football League. Rugby, squash, boxing and pool have likewise each been successfully sued by women.

— Patricia Wynn Davies

### Terry Marsh acquitted of student grant fraud

Terry Marsh, the former champion boxer, emerged triumphant from a criminal trial for the second time yesterday and promptly invited the jury out for a celebratory drink.

Mr Marsh, 39, was acquitted at Southwark Crown Court of making a fraudulent application for a university grant. The jury took just 15 minutes to clear him of furnishing false information to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Mr Marsh, who stood down as a Liberal Democrat candidate, because of the charges, said that he intended to report the council to the local government ombudsman. "There could be a civil

action as regards a breach of confidentiality," he said.

In 1990, Mr Marsh was cleared of attempting to murder his former promoter, Frank Warren. He began studying for his first degree while in prison on remand.

At this week's trial, the prosecution argued that Mr Marsh deliberately omitted from his application form the fact that he had received a grant for the earlier degree from Essex Council. But he told the jury that he had believed that he was entitled to the second grant of £9,428. When he realised his mistake, he contacted the authority to point it out and asked to take a Higher National Diploma instead.



## UPDATE

### SOCIETY

### Scottish prison branded a disgrace

Scotland's largest prison, which is running at 51 per cent over capacity, have been criticised as a "national disgrace", in a report published yesterday. The chronic overcrowding at Glasgow's Barlinnie Prison was highlighted by Clive Fairweather, Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland. The report said the overcrowding was "pervading almost every part of the prison and its regime" and that it had "health and hygiene implications".

He said: "It is nothing short of a national disgrace that over the years so many have had to endure the conditions resulting from the constant mismatch created between the finite number of cells available and a burgeoning prison population ..."

The prison inspector hinted that more bail beds, supervised attendance orders, and community service orders, would ease the problem at the prison.

But governor Roger Houchin said the report "misrepresented and ignored the facts". He argued: "I am not prepared ... simply to let go unchallenged a degree of licence with the facts that misrepresents the considerable achievements of my staff in delivering a quality of service of which they and the public can be proud."



### TECHNOLOGY

### Self-destruct videos save return trip

A new Digital Video Disc that self-destructs after two days could put an end to the trek back to the video shop to return a film. Specially-designed video machines will time the high-tech discs as soon as they start to play and the film comes on.

Once they reach the two-day limit, the disc automatically refuses to play and can be thrown away.

The American-based Digital Video Express consortium (Divx) wants to replace familiar video tapes with the limited-life discs. *New Scientist* reports this week. The two-day discs will cost less than £3 - almost five times less than the Digital Video Discs which already exist. The new technology has been given a cautious welcome by the big film companies who fear it will be easy to make pirate copies of films from the discs. So, to protect them against the threat, the films will all be scrambled and a special code will be needed to access them.

### TRANSPORT

### Rail firms 'put customers last'

It is too easy for privatised rail companies to claim bonuses for good performance and too difficult for passengers to claim compensation for bad service, according to research published yesterday.

And privatisation has not rid the industry of the "customers last" philosophy which allegedly dogged the nationalised British Rail, says the Consumers' Association report *Signal Failures - The Regulation of Rail*.

Author Phil Evans calls for a new Strategic Rail Authority to act as an industry watchdog, saying the Passenger's Charter which is supposed to protect consumers' rights is seen by many as little more than a "pretty marketing tool". The report calls for simplified complaints procedures and an increase in compensation levels to reflect more fairly the discomfort and inconvenience caused to passengers by overcrowding, ageing rolling stock and inaccurate fare and timetable information.

And it criticises the massive incentive payouts made by the rail regulators, which last year paid train companies £13.3m more in bonuses for punctuality and reliability than it took from them in fines for poor performance.

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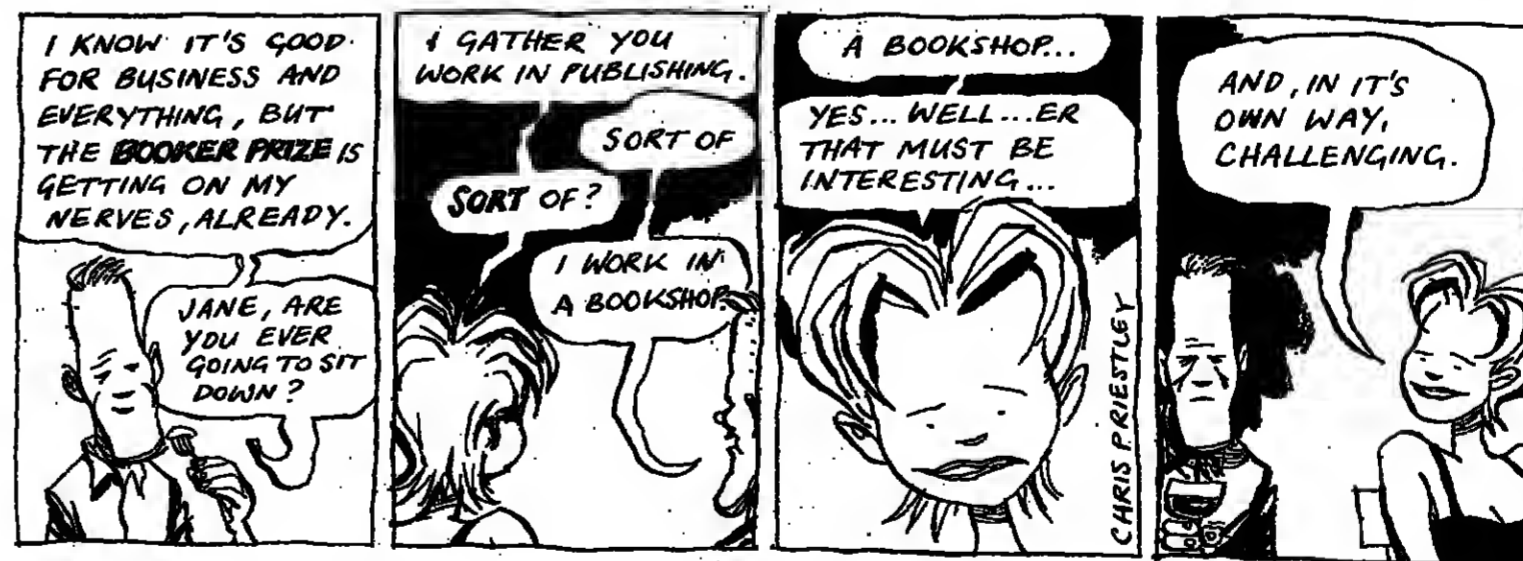
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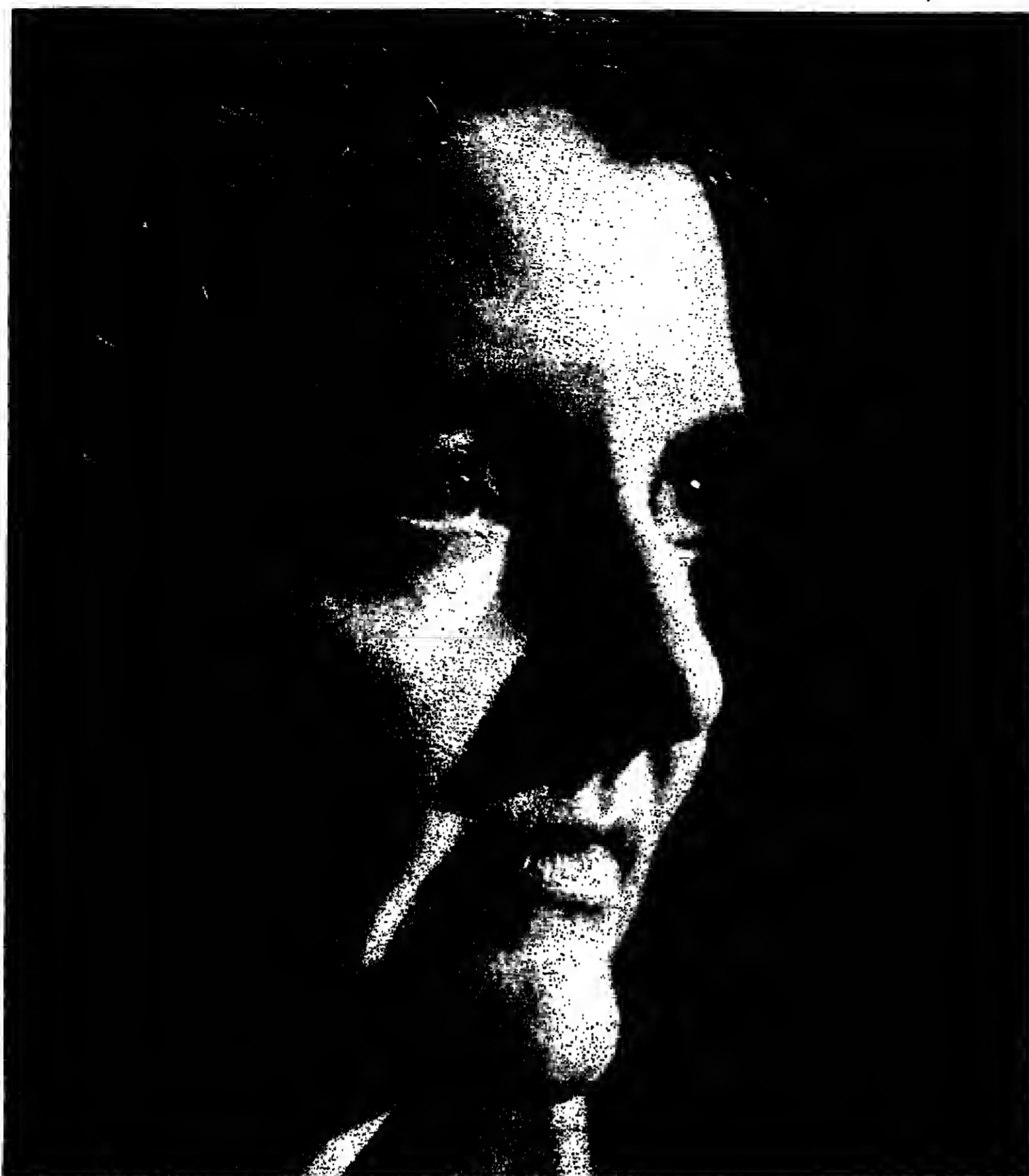
by Chris Priestley

### ZITS



by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

مكتبة من الصحف



Diane Blood: 'I am fine but I haven't started treatment yet. I am going through the processes they require'

Photograph: Peter Macdarmid

## Six months on, why am I kept waiting to conceive my dead husband's baby?

Diane Blood's treatment to conceive her dead husband's child has still not started more than six months after the historic court ruling allowing her to take his frozen sperm to a clinic in Belgium for in vitro fertilisation. **Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor,** spoke to her on the day the Government issued a consultation document on changing the law.

This has been a difficult year for Diane Blood. The 33-year-old widow thought her battle for the right to bear her dead husband's child was won last February when the Appeal Court in effect forced the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority to allow her to seek fertility treatment abroad.

But having persuaded the courts of the justice of her case she has since faced the equally difficult task of convincing the doctors in the Belgian fertility clinic where she is seeking treatment that it would be right to go ahead.

Yesterday, she was putting a brave face on the delay: "Everything is trundling along very slowly. I am fine and well and happy but I haven't started treatment yet. I am going through the processes they require in Belgium." She said the clinic, at the Free University of Brussels, required patients to undergo counselling before treatment began, as in Britain. "You do not have an automatic right to treatment. The

clinic decides whether to offer treatment taking account of the welfare of the child. It is up to the individual doctors to decide who they treat and who they don't. I am still going through that process."

Ms Blood was referred to the clinic by her doctor in Britain after the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority ruled that sperm taken from her husband while he lay in a coma before he died from meningitis had been removed without written consent and it would be against the law for her to use it for treatment in Britain. When she applied to export the frozen sperm to Belgium, the authority at first refused but later relented after intervention of the Appeal Court.

At the time of the case, Paul De Vroey, clinical director of the Centre for Reproductive Medicine at the Brussels Free University, said there was no guarantee that Mrs Blood would be treated. He said she would be interviewed and would receive counselling and her request would then be considered by the clinical team before going to the ethics committee for the final decision.

The case provoked widespread criticism of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, which was accused of being "callous and pedantic", and the last government ordered a review of the law. Yesterday, the first stage in that review, a consultation document setting out the options for change and their consequences, was published by the health department. At present the law requires written consent to the removal of gametes (sperm or eggs) and changing it would be

more difficult than most people realise, Sheila McLean, author of the review and professor of law and ethics in medicine at Glasgow University said yesterday. "When I started doing this, I did not realise how complex it would be. If the view at the end of the consultation period is that there should be a change then it would be possible to do but we would need to be very clear about what principles should operate and what interests we are trying to protect."

Two bills were introduced following the Diane Blood case - one by the fertility pioneer Lord Winston - which sought to soften the rigid requirement for written consent by qualifying it with the word "usually" or "normally". Both bills were later withdrawn but the report notes that they "would undoubtedly have had wider implications had they become law."

Yesterday Professor McLean said such an amendment would mean someone or some body would have to decide which conceptions were to be allowed to go ahead. "What tests would we use to make that judgment and who would be authorised to make it?" she said.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority yesterday welcomed the review but warned against opening the door to cases which have been allowed in other countries such as the United States.

A spokesman said: "In other countries parents of children in their early teens who have been knocked down by a car have demanded and received their sperm or eggs for storage or future fertilisation. In this kind of case it is difficult to argue that it is informed consent."

## Lawyers argue over 'blood money' for Saudi nurses

Saudi Arabia's ambassador reacted furiously yesterday to Britain's criticism of the sentence of 500 lashes handed down to a nurse accused of murder. **Steve Beggan** says that while lawyers and politicians are turning up the heat, a second nurse accused of the killing awaits her fate.

The British nurses accused of murdering a colleague in Saudi Arabia were caught in a furious row over "blood money" yesterday as the diplomatic argument over plans to flog one of them escalated.

Lucille McLauchlan, 31, was visited in prison by one of her lawyers and told of an Islamic court's decision to sentence her to 500 lashes and eight years in jail. Her co-accused Deborah Parry, 38, still awaits news of her fate, but claims that a lawyer's "trick" would make it impossible for her to be beheaded were rejected last night by Islamic scholars.

While lawyers for both sides were arguing, the Saudi ambassador to Britain, Dr Ghazi Alghosbi, attacked criticism of his country's justice system and those who sought to "decimate" it. "We do not propose to change any country's judicial system and we will not allow any country to change our system," he said.

On Tuesday, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, angered the Saudis by denouncing the threat of flogging as "wholly unacceptable in the modern world".

Foreign Office sources said diplomats were busy working in the background to defuse tension between Britain and Saudi Arabia in advance of Mr Cook's meeting with Prince Saud, the Saudi foreign minister, in New York tomorrow.

The blood money row began early yesterday after lawyers for both sides held a meeting in Adelaide. That concluded with a joint statement saying that both sets of Australian lawyers - those representing Frank Gilford, brother of the murdered nurse Yvonne Gilford, and those representing the accused - had agreed that Mr Gilford had not waived his rights to demand the death penalty. Under Sharia law, only he can have the sentence commuted.

The meeting was held in response to claims by Salah al-Hejailan, the nurses' Saudi lawyer, that he had "tricked" Mr Gilford into waiving his rights by persuading him to enter into negotiations over reparations, or blood money.

"Under Saudi law ... once you talk about money in any way, you cannot again talk about the death sentence," said Mr al-Hejailan. "He has signed an agreement which is with the British Commissioner in Australia. [Mr Gilford's] lawyers do not understand Saudi law. If you like, I have tricked them out of the option of a death penalty."

He claimed that Mr Gilford and the nurses had signed an agreement under which a trust fund would be set up in his sister's name to establish a children's hospital and a further £290,000 would be paid to Mr Gilford. Unconfirmed reports put the total package at £750,000. It is believed that a number of anonymous benefactors have pledged the lion's share.

Ms Gilford, 55, was stabbed 13 times, bludgeoned and suffocated in her room at the King Fahd military medical complex in Dhahran last December.

A source in Mr al-Hejailan's office in Saudi told *The Independent* that a copy of the blood money agreement was being held there in a safe.

However, the claims brought a swift and angry denial from Mr Gilford at his home in



Frank Gilford, the victim's brother, has not waived right to demand death penalty

Jamestown, South Australia. A statement issued by Michael Abbott QC, and John Keoo for Mr Gilford, and by Dick Whittington QC and Michael Burnett for the nurses, said: "Both parties confirmed that the comments attributed to Mr Salah al-Hejailan [that Mr Gilford] had in any way waived his rights as an heir under Saudi law were wrong ... Mr Gilford has not waived any rights he may have."

The British Consul in Australia refused to confirm that the commissioner was holding an agreement, although the Foreign Office in London said it had been aware of negotiations and had encouraged them.

Mr al-Hejailan insisted that an agreement was in existence. However, Islamic scholars in the UK rejected his claims that it would render a death sentence impossible. Neither scholar would be named, but agreed negotiations can continue until agreement is made or a death sentence carried out.

News of the latest developments were passed to the two nurses yesterday by Michael Dark, Mr al-Hejailan's partner, at the Central Prison in Dammam. William Parry, the consul general, is expected to visit the women on Sunday, while Baroness Symons, minister for consular relations, spoke to both families yesterday. Ann and Stan McLauchlan, from Dundee, were arranging to fly out to their daughter yesterday.

The Saudi ambassador's outburst came in response to Mr Cook's comments, the reaction of the British media and accusations levelled at the Saudi justice system by Labour's Ann Clwyd, a long time campaigner for human rights.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme, she said: "These extreme punishments are imposed after trials which everybody knows are not conducted in accordance with internationally accepted judicial standards."

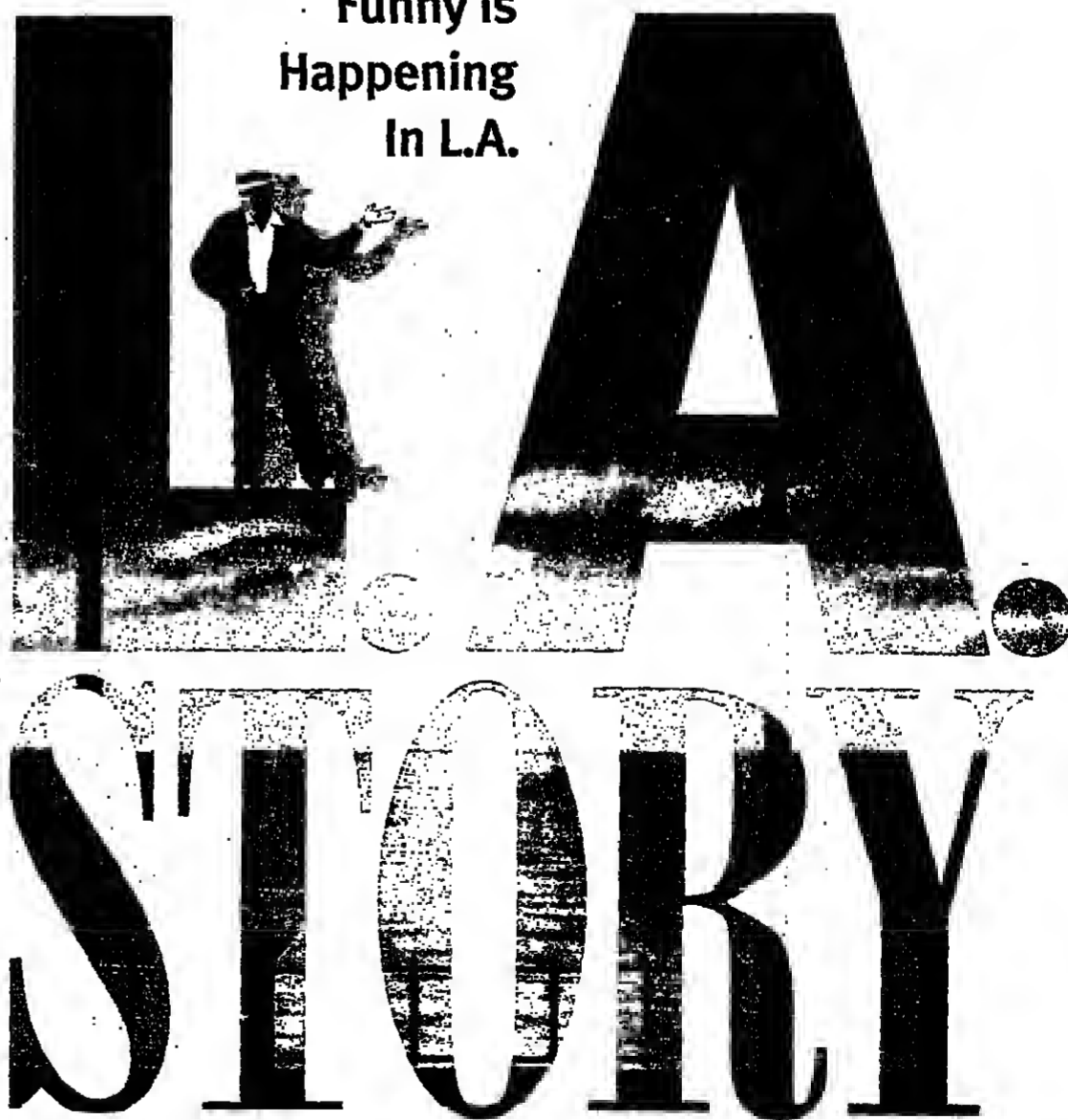
"There are doubts, of course, that these women were guilty ... They made confessions which apparently followed physical and sexual assaults by police, and they were coerced into confessing."

Details of the women's subsequent statements, withdrawing their confessions, were published in the *Daily Mail*. Ms McLauchlan spoke of being ordered to undress, of her breasts being fondled and of being slapped across the face. She said she was threatened with multiple rape and told she would be home "in two or three weeks" if she confessed to the killing. Ms Parry's experience was similar. "I am told to remove my clothes or they would do it for me. I removed them and they surrounded me. One knelt down with his head just between my knees and removed some pubic hair with scissors. They said if I move they would cut me."

Leading article, page 20

STEVE MARTIN  
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## Doctors get help to make life and death decisions

Two out of three babies and children who die in paediatric intensive care do so after treatment is withdrawn.

Yesterday, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health issued guidelines to help doctors and parents make these agonising decisions. Jeremy Laurence, Health Editor, investigates.

Desperately ill children who would never have survived a decade ago can now be kept alive as a result of advances in medical techniques. A survey by the Royal College of Paediatrics of premature babies born at up to 25 weeks gestation found of those who were admitted to the neonatal unit but later died, 60 per cent did so because care was withdrawn.

Professor Neil McIntosh, chairman of the college's ethics advisory committee, said: "They would have been mainly 22 and 23 week babies who were not offered care because the doctors believed the chances of good survival were very poor. Babies of 25 weeks would be offered care."

In older children treated in intensive care units, 60 per cent of those who die also do so after their care is withdrawn. To help in deciding when care should be withheld, the college issued a document yesterday, setting out five situations in which it might be appropriate to let the children die.

These include children cer-

tified as brain dead or in permanent vegetative state, who do not react or relate to the outside world. Three other situations identified include:

● the "no chance" situation in which the child has such severe disease that continuing treatment merely delays death without easing suffering.

● the "no purpose" situation in which survival is possible but the degree of physical or mental impairment is so great that "it is unreasonable to expect them to bear it."

● the "unbearable situation" in which the child or their family feel that in the face of progressive and irreversible illness further treatment is more than can be borne.

The report cites the example of a baby born at 23 weeks weighing little more than 1lb who might be saved with weeks of intensive care but at high risk of severe mental and physical handicap.

A second example given is that of a 10-year-old girl with leukaemia who is not responding to treatment after a three-year struggle and whose parents decide that she has had enough. In a third, it is suggested that a teenager with muscular dystrophy who has no chance of surviving to adulthood and who develops pneumonia might be denied antibiotics and ventilation so he can die peacefully.

Professor McIntosh said the report had taken over two years to produce and had been rewritten more than ten times because of the sensitivity of the issues. He said there was no escaping the fact that doctors had to make decisions about the quality of other people's lives.



Breast can be best: New mothers seeking advice on breastfeeding now have two charity organisations to turn to

Photograph: David Rose

## Rival to National Childbirth Trust is formed

A new organisation for breastfeeding counsellors is launched today. Its members aim to give independent advice to pregnant women in contrast, they claim, with the National Childbirth Trust from which they resigned two months ago over the charity's decision to accept sponsorship from the Sainsbury supermarket chain.

Louise Jury investigates why the rival body has been set up.

Around 70 women who were previously experienced breastfeeding counsellors with the National Childbirth Trust (NCT) are the founding members of the Breastfeeding Network.

Many were among those who quit the NCT in July because they felt compromised by its decision to accept sponsorship from Sainsbury's, which sells its own make of breast milk substitute.

The rebels argued that accepting the money from the only supermarket with its own brand of infant formula was an apparent endorsement which conflicted with their professional duty to be impartial as laid down in World Health Organisation guidelines.

Mary Broadfoot, from Glasgow, a trustee and one of the founders of the new charity, said: "We believe that parents have the right to independent information about breastfeeding to enable them to make an informed choice as to how to feed their babies, and to be supported in that choice. I think we've done the right thing."

The Breastfeeding Network will offer information and support for breastfeeding mothers and will set up a programme to train more volunteer counsellors.

It will not accept support from any company which manufactures or distributes infant formula, feeding bottles or teats. The network is being funded by donations and sub-

scriptions and plans to have local support groups across the country. Interested parties can join as associate members.

"Businesses can make money from parents' choices about infant feeding - breast-milk substitutes, feeding bottles and teats all make money for someone, while breast-milk is free," Mrs Broadfoot said. Another trustee, Phyll Buchanan, from Wokingham, said: "We are working towards increasing awareness of current research on infant feeding, and also towards creating a society which affirms the right of all mothers to breast-feed their babies."

Andrew Radford, director of the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative, said he

welcomed the formation of the network, adding: "It will enable skilled breastfeeding supporters to continue their work with mothers."

A spokeswoman for the National Childbirth Trust, which has 600 breastfeeding counsellors and 300 trainees, said it looked forward to working alongside it the Breastfeeding Network. But she stressed that there had been a vote by NCT members to accept Sainsbury's sponsorship. "The NCT will not be associated with a company name that is primarily associated in the public mind with formula milk. Until the recent publicity, few people would have been aware that Sainsbury's sell an own-brand product," she said.

## Ovaries taken out without woman's knowledge

A woman who had an operation in a private hospital during which her ovaries were removed without her consent only found out when she went to pay the bill.

Jackie Bartley noticed an item for hormone replacement therapy and thought there must have been a mistake. She discovered that her surgeon, John Studd, one of the country's leading gynaecologists, had inserted HRT pellets to take over the function of her missing ovaries.

Yesterday, Mr Studd, director of the fertility unit at the private Lister hospital in London and a member of the council of the Royal College of Obstetricians, appeared before the General Medical Council accused of serious professional misconduct.

The operation, carried out at the Lister hospital in 1992, had been for stress incontinence. Mrs Bartley had consented to a hysterectomy but not to the removal of her ovaries and the discovery of what the surgeon had done "left me feeling like a piece of meat," she told the disciplinary hearing.

Mr Studd said he had removed her ovaries after discovering she was suffering from thickening of the lining of her womb.

He denied that there was insufficient medical justification to remove her ovaries without her consent.

Mrs Bartley was awarded £32,500 in an out of court settlement in July 1995 after she sued Mr Studd.

She told the hearing she had been upset and distressed when she discovered what had happened and had angrily confronted Mr Studd. He had said: "Apart from being mad at me, how are you?"

She said he apologised and said it was unforgivable he had not consulted her.

— Jeremy Laurence

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**The Samaritans**

# 6/LIB DEM CONFERENCE

## Ashdown stands up for the new politics

Liberal Democrats will have to compromise their purity and their policies, Paddy Ashdown warned his party yesterday. Anthony Bevis, Political Editor, listened to a brave speech delivered by the leader at his party's Eastbourne conference.

The political prizes of continuing constitutional change could only be won if the Liberal Democrats were prepared to take risks, to get involved in the "historic game" of working with others, Mr Ashdown told his party in the keynote conference speech.

Defying the carping of critics who dislike any hint of "cosying up" with Labour, Mr Ashdown won strong applause for a firm line folded into the traditional attacks on Labour and the Tories. But the highest cheer of the speech went to a passage which he promised to maintain the attack against Labour government spending cuts "that will fall on our

schools and our hospital and our public services this winter".

Pointing out that it had been the Liberal Democrats who had highlighted the "black hole" in government spending, there was a roar of approval when Mr Ashdown added "and we will continue to do it day after day after day".

However, the reassurance that the Liberal Democrats would maintain critical independence and distinctive ideas prepared the ground for the main message of the day and the week - the need to co-operate with Labour, and break "the destructive tribalism" of British politics.

"Part of our mandate from May," he said "was to create a new style of politics - a more rational and constructive style of politics. We have called it constructive opposition."

"Cajoling, influencing, shaping but, yes if necessary vigorously opposing where the government is wrong, but working with them where we agree and where it is in the nation's interest."

"Where we should co-operate, we will do so wholeheartedly. But where we must

oppose, we will do so unflinchingly."

"Here is my prayer for the Parliament ahead. May we have the power to oppose what we must oppose - the courage to support what we must support - and the wisdom to know the difference."

"Yes, it is sometimes easier to shout than to talk; to trade insults than to shake hands; to confront than to converse. But we if we are to make a new start in Britain we must tread the more difficult path."

"If the Prime Minister is serious, as I believe he is, about changing the culture of our politics, I will work with him on that. Because that is the way we can make a difference, just as we said we would."

Mr Ashdown warned that all was not going to be plain sailing. "No doubt we shall not always agree with every detail of the Government's proposals on constitutional reform and no doubt, not everything we do agree will match every dotted 'i' and cross 't' of every Liberal Democrat policy. And that may mean compromises. And I will find that as tough as any of you." That passage of the



Paddy Ashdown: 'Part of our mandate from May was to create a more traditional and constructive style of politics'

Photograph: David Rose

speech was received in complete silence, but Mr Ashdown said the party could not play safe. "Compacency, self-satisfaction, timidity. These are the traps. An excessive concern

for our own purity. An inability to distinguish the trivial from the vital. A natural desire for a quiet life. If because of these, we fail to play our part in the changes which are now

happening, then our successes on May 1 could just as easily be, not a triumphant breakthrough, but a mere footnote of history - an event which appeared remarkable at the time but which

in the end, changed nothing. I am utterly determined that that does not happen."

The leader told the representatives that he was a Liberal Democrat and could never be

anything else. "But love this party as I do, I don't believe that just because we wear the same team colours, all that we say is always right and all that others say is always wrong."

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## Delegates vote to take the fight to Labour

Despite their leader's call for closer co-operation with the Government, delegates put themselves at odds with the Blair project. From Abrams examines the policy gap

In two debates that came after Paddy Ashdown urged representatives to move forward constructively with the Government, the conference voted to continue opposition to Labour.

First came a discussion of the Government's plans for a devolved London authority headed by an elected mayor. Although the Liberal Democrats want a new London government they voted to continue to campaign against a mayor.

They passed a motion calling for full proposals to be published in a bill before a planned referendum, for greater powers for the new body and for opposition to the mayor.

Paul Farthing, who is a councillor in London and who moved the motion, said the city needed regional government but not of Labour's kind.

"The presidential style model proposed by Labour risks the paralysis of government we often witness between the president of the United States and Congress. Forget strong government, forget weak government. I want a effective government," he said.

Representatives later heard that the "list" system of proportional representation proposed for the Scottish and Welsh parliaments - in which some candidates are directly

elected and others are chosen by parties on a proportional basis - would be unfair.

The government's proposed electoral commission should be told by the Liberal Democrats that any new proportional system should be by Single Transferable Vote, in which losers' votes are redistributed.

Adrian Collett, Liberal Democrat leader on Hampshire County Council, said electoral deals would be done in "smoke-filled rooms" under Labour's plans.

"Either we mean what we said for all these years that electoral reform is about making our democracy meaningful again, about putting it into the hands of the people," he said, "...or we are just the self-seeking bunch of political cynics that our opponents in the media always said we were."

## Thorpe returns from the wilderness

Jeremy Thorpe, the disgraced former Liberal Party leader, was given a rousing reception when he appeared at the conference yesterday.

Mr Thorpe, who is suffering from Parkinson's Disease, made what was believed to be his first conference appearance for nearly 20 years.

He came to hear Paddy Ashdown's speech and took his seat in the auditorium at Eastbourne shortly before lunchtime.

He rose to his feet as he was introduced by the platform and clasped his hands together above his head to acknowledge the cheers of delegates, some of them giving him a standing ovation.

The former Liberal leader nodded and applauded with others through Mr Ashdown's speech and rose to his feet with the rest of those in the hall at the end.

Mr Thorpe stood down as Liberal leader in 1976 after a series of allegations about his private life. He was acquitted at the Old Bailey in 1979 after being charged with conspiracy to murder.

Mr Thorpe appeared briefly on the cam-



Jeremy Thorpe: Rousing reception

paign trail with Mr Ashdown in the South West of England in 1992, but he has made few political appearances since his acquittal.

A spokesman for Mr Ashdown said: "The party had a long, hard climb back from the wilderness years in the 1940s and 1950s and the contribution of Jo Grimond, Jeremy Thorpe and David (now Lord) Steel to that climb back has been immense."

"Jeremy Thorpe's leadership at that time was tremendously inspirational and so the party is very pleased to see him here."

## Call for all-party effort to save NHS

Conditions in hospitals are bound to worsen this winter as a deficit in the health service deepens, the Liberal Democrat conference was told yesterday.

Simon Hughes, the party's health spokesman, suggested the overspend could rise to £800m this year from around £700m last year. He called for health professionals, Tories and Labour Party members to join a standing conference aimed at finding solutions to the crisis.

Although other estimates put lower figures on the short-fall - the NHS Confederation suggested it might be £600m to

£700m - Mr Hughes said only collaboration could solve it.

"There is one coalition that the British people want politicians to sign up to now. A coalition to secure the future of the NHS," he said, referring to reports that Liberal Democrats might be moving towards a pact with Labour.

Dr Evan Harris, another member of the party's health team, said Labour has missed opportunities to put an extra £700m into the health service since the election. Putting the proceeds of the abolition of subsidies on private health insur-

ance into the health service along with extra tobacco taxes would have saved more than £300m, he said.

Plans to charge tuition fees would drain money from the service in bursaries.

An outbreak of flu or a spell of cold weather would cause more problems for hospitals this winter, he said.

"Are our hospitals forced to count on sudden global warming? Or is the Labour party navigating this country's health service up a creek and throwing out the paddle," he asked.

— From Abrams

## 'Private Eye' readers go undercover over Diana

Britain's best-known satirical magazine was pulled from newsagents' shelves when it attacked the reaction of press and public to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. Paul McCann reveals how readers are trying to ensure it can continue to speak out.

Postal subscriptions to *Private Eye* have doubled following the banning of the magazine by oesageants in the aftermath of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Readers seeking to make sure they can get the magazine in future, no matter what it prints, are lining up for home delivery while others have donated thousands of pounds because they are worried that its loss of sales on the "Diana" issue could jeopardise its future.

The magazine's editor, Ian Hislop, estimates that one-third of the magazine's usual 180,000 sales were lost because of the censorship by newsagents, but he is returning readers' cheques "because things aren't quite that bad".

Three days after the Princess's death, *Private Eye*'s front cover targeted what it saw as the public's hypocrisy in buying newspapers that they were then blaming for her death.

The magazine's famous "speech-bubble" cover showed crowds outside Buckingham Palace trying to get bold of a newspaper containing pictures of Diana's crashed car.

This was deemed "inappropriate" by the large T&S Stores and Alldays retail chains which banned the magazine outright. WH Smith first pulled the magazine then allowed their individual managers to decide whether or not to sell the *Eye* or to keep it under a counter out of sight.

"We pointed out to Smiths that they had been making money from selling tabloids

printing pictures of Diana just hours before her death," said Mr Hislop. "So it was rather hypocritical of them not to put the *Eye* on their shelves. The fact is that this supposed deep grief expressed itself in terms of self-righteousness."

"We've doubled the usual number of subs [subscriptions] we sell in the two weeks since the banned issue," added Mr Hislop. "Because it is the only way to ensure that you get your copy."

The magazine also ran a hitting leader from its fake oesageant, the "Daily Gnome", apologising on behalf of the British press for having in the past portrayed Diana as "A neurotic, irresponsible and manipulative troublemaker," and that the press only realised after her death that she was, "in fact the most saintly woman who has ever lived". The "Daily Gnome" leader column expressed the British press's "sincere and deepest hypocrisy".

The *Eye* has received an "enormous" amount of post because of its Diana issue with some correspondents accusing the magazine of being "grossly offensive" and worse. But the magazine insists that the positive letters have outweighed the negative by ten to one.

"There was a range of targets on offer in that issue," said Mr Hislop. "We took on the hypocrisy of the public, which was risky. But most of it was the overwhelming bilge being pumped out by the media."

*Private Eye* was removed from a small number of oesageants in the early Nineties for running the headline: "The Fuck Stops Here" when President Bill Clinton's sexual fidelity first became a political issue.

An entire issue was once pulped on the instructions of lawyers working for Lord Parkinson, the current chairman of the Conservative Party.

*Private Eye* later managed to overturn the injunction and ran Lord Parkinson on the front cover with "I've stopped the huggers printing" coming out of his mouth.

## Privacy code puts new curb on press

Newspaper editors have agreed extensive changes to rules covering their behaviour because of the paparazzi's involvement in the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Paul McCann looks at how the famous, the Royal and the humble will get more protection.

The sight of a media scrum swarming around someone in the eye of a publicity storm should become a thing of the past after a review of the rules of conduct for journalists in the aftermath of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

New regulations on harassment and privacy will be announced today by Lord Wakeham, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission.

They are expected to include a formal definition of harassment that will allow the PCC to clamp down on publications whose staff take part in "collective harassment which is not justified by the nature of the event".

The stricter harassment definition is designed to prevent the kind of paparazzi tactics that played a part in the death of the princess.

It is understood that some editors have told Lord Wakeham that they were concerned that the new rules should not allow MPs to escape the attentions of investigative journalists by crying "harassment"

if they have something in their personal or financial affairs to hide.

Also to be included is an extension of the restriction which bans photography of individuals in private places to areas such as churches and restaurants "where individuals might reasonably expect a degree of privacy".

These exclusions are designed to tighten the current rules about reporters and photographers intruding on people during times of "shock and grief", particularly funerals.

The new regulations for the public are on top of agreements reached by newspaper editors not to intrude on the lives of Princess William and Harry up to and past their 16th birthdays.

The changes to the code of conduct, which have been described as the most extensive in the history of the PCC, were agreed at a full meeting of the commission in London yesterday.

Sir David English, editor-in-chief of the *Daily Mail*, said: "We have to review everything in the light of what's happened in the last month."

"I think the media does respond in public opinion because the media is commercial and to a large extent the public have the power to make the media do what they want."

The Broadcasting Standards Commission has called on broadcasters and politicians to rethink the balance between freedom of speech and public offence after a British National Party election broadcast brought complaints from 76 viewers.



Sitting pretty: *Private Eye* editor Ian Hislop is to return thousands of pounds in donations sent by readers after the magazine was pulled off newsagents' shelves Photograph: Tom Pilton

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## Union leaders push for higher minimum wage

**After more than a decade of agonising, the high command of the trade union movement yesterday decided that it would demand a national minimum wage of 'somewhat more than £4 an hour'.**

**Barrie Clement, Labour Editor,** discloses the contents of the first significant 'bid' set to go before the Low Pay Commission.

With days to go before the Labour Party conference, ministers were yesterday urged by union leaders to set the national minimum wage at least 50p an hour higher than they envisage. Members of the Trades Union Congress's executive committee yesterday approved a confidential paper calling for a rate of more than £4 an hour.

The paper, which will now go before the TUC's ruling general council, urges an "incremental approach to the elimination of low pay", which suggests that the initial rate should only be a starting point and it should increase in relative and absolute terms over time. The TUC is due to give oral evidence on 14 October to the Low Pay Commission, set up by the Government to advise on the rate. It assumes that the minimum will be introduced in late 1998 or early 1999.

An amendment to go before next week's party conference in Brighton calling for £4.42 an hour is likely to be air-brushed from the agenda by a leadership anxious to avoid being tied to any figure. The decision by the TUC is therefore potentially embarrassing for Labour leaders.

Yesterday, senior union leaders expressed their disapproval of a draft prepared by Congress House officials calling for a wage set at "around £4 an hour" and insisted that it be inflated to "somewhat more than £4 an hour". The change was made in deference to some powerful affiliates, such as public-service union Unison, which are calling for a rate set at half male median earnings calculated at £4.42.

The TUC asserts that a £4 minimum would save £380m in state benefits paid to those in work. Over the last two years the £4 figure has been a target for unions in negotiations with employers.

There should be "a generally accepted notion of what constitutes a fair wage", the paper argues and commends the half male median earnings formula. It accepts, however, that it can be calculated to produce a figure of £3.65, £3.95 or £44.42 an hour. The paper considers that the rate should apply to earnings and not to basic wages to take into account piece-work pay.

The paper is silent on whether there should be a lower rate for trainees or for younger workers, although the Low Pay Commission has been asked by ministers to consider the matter. It says the minimum should apply to "all workers no matter what their status may be".



**Farmyard ferry:** Garry Williams, a shepherd in Norfolk, moving his flock of Hebridian sheep from an island on the Hicking  
Broad to fresh mainland grazing Photograph: Brian Harris

## First-born boys for older dads

Ageing sugar daddies seeking a male heir for their fortune should get hitched pronto to that young popsie. British scientists have found that women who marry men much older than themselves have a greater chance of having a boy as their first child. "The age difference between parents predicts the sex of the first child," said John Manning and colleagues at the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Liverpool.

A study of 301 families, with age differences ranging from husbands 15 years older to nine years younger than their wives, found that where the husband is younger, or up to five years older, a daughter is the likeliest first child. On average, men are two years older than their wives.

The researchers are stumped for the reason: "We don't know why, but that is the case in our data," said Professor Manning. Certainly, some maternal effect does exist. Studies in the Forties and Fifties found that after war and periods of hardship, when the age difference in marriages tends to increase, more boys are born.

—Charles Arthur

## Hanged man's case reviewed after 45 years

**A man who was hanged 45 years ago for allegedly slitting the throat of a shopkeeper is to have his case re-examined by the Court of the Appeal.**

The move follows years of campaigning by the family of Mahmood Mattan, in particular his widow Laura.

Mattan, a Somali seaman from the Tiger Bay area of Cardiff, was hanged in 1952 for the murder of Lily Volpert.

Mrs Mattan's solicitors said yesterday that it is "beyond belief" that Mr Mattan was executed.

Miss Volpert, a shopkeeper, was found with her throat cut and between £100 and £200 was missing. Mattan's trial lasted three days and the jury was out for little more than 90 minutes. He was executed seven weeks after his conviction.

He was convicted on the identification evidence of one witness and one piece of "forensic" evidence: blood on one shoe. The witness maintained that Mattan had left the shop at 8pm at the latest. But even Miss Volpert's family were sure that she was still alive at

8.05 to 8.10pm. The man was described as being 5ft 10in, with a gold tooth, no hat or coat, aged 30 to 40 and wearing a brown suit. Mattan was 5ft 8in and aged 29. He had no gold tooth and had worn a dark overcoat that night.

The blood was a few tiny specks on a secondhand shoe. It was not tested forensically. The Criminal Cases Review Commission has referred the case to the Court of Appeal which could posthumously clear Marran of the murder.

— Jason Bennetto

## Motor industry agrees number plates change

The August rush for new car number plates looks to be over, and ministers have agreed with the motor industry that the costs of selling 25 per cent of all vehicles in one month are excessive.

The Government is to move to a system under which the letter of the alphabet that indicates the year of registration will be changed every six months. Once those letters are exhausted, the

administration plans to introduce a new system – also based on a six-monthly change. The changes will take effect from September next year, contingent on approval from the motor industry. The new registration plates would be the biggest change in the system since the present regime came into effect in 1963.

The industry has long complained that the once-a-year

switch is a commercial nightmare, creating a patchy cash flow and large storage costs.

The present series of letters is due to end in 2004, if not sooner. Alternatives include systems based on geographical areas, and a combination of age and area identifiers, or, registration numbers which would remain with the owner rather than with the vehicle.

— **Randeep Ramesh**

# NORTHERN ROCK BUILDING SOCIETY

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION  
FOR NORTHERN ROCK BUILDING SOCIETY  
SHARE AND DEPOSIT ACCOUNT CUSTOMERS**

The following amendments to all of Northern Rock Building Society's (the "Society") share and deposit account terms and conditions will take effect on the date (the "Vesting Date") on which the Society's business is transferred to Northern Rock plc:

1. the Rules of the Society will cease to apply; and
2. the Northern Rock General Investment Conditions (as amended from time to time) will be deemed to be incorporated in the terms and conditions of all Northern Rock plc investment accounts as at the Vesting Date.

## Notes

1. Investors in the Society's share and deposit accounts will become depositors in Northern Rock plc from the Vesting Date - which is expected to be 1 October 1997.
2. The Northern Rock General Investment Conditions are available on request from Northern Rock, T and C Request, Investment Enquiries, Northern Rock House, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4PL.
3. The General Investment Conditions which were set out on pages 84 to 87 (inclusive) of the Society's Transfer Document dated 17 February 1997 have been amended as follows:-
  - a. Clause (iii) - the deletion of the word "holder" in the last line; and
  - b. Clause (xxciii) - the insertion of the words "and NR plc agrees" in the first line. In addition, certain other non-material amendments have been made to the General Investment Conditions which were set out in the Transfer Document.

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## Barriers break as Britain embraces upward mobility

Class distinctions may exist but are not a block to reaching the top, according to a report.

Michael Streever looks at the debate over whether family background still matters in Britain.

Last year the distinguished economist Lord Bauer and the editor of the *Spectator* magazine, Frank Johnson, nominated an earl for membership of the Garrick Club. Here were two low-born men – one the immigrant son of a Hungarian book-maker, the other son of a pastry chef – backing the blue-blooded Earl of Onslow for entry to one of the country's most exclusive establishments.

Mr Johnson recalls the impact it had on his friend. "I remember Peter [Lord Bauer] saying, 'how can people believe this is a class-driven society when two oiks like us nominate the Earl of Onslow for the Garrick?'"

The outcome was that Lord Bauer dusted down a 20-year-old pamphlet on British society and today publishes the updated version called "Class on the Brain", a brief study of social mobility.

Its theme is simple. Differences of class may still permeate British life but they are not – and he claims, rarely have been – barriers to social advancement. Moreover, Lord Bauer claims that widespread acceptance of the "misconceptions" about class has itself harmed society and social mobility by encouraging damaging policies.

In his introduction, Lord Bauer says:



Rich pickings: Melvyn Bragg, far left, Ann Gloag and John Birt have all risen to the top from humble origins

"The [restrictive and divisive class] system is supposed to be a major barrier to economic progress in Britain and also a significant source of justified social discontent. This is untrue."

To back his argument, he gives examples of numerous people from "modest" backgrounds who have achieved much in fields such as commerce, the Civil Service, politics, education, the media and the church.

In the media, the pamphlet cites the John Birt, director-general of the BBC, who

was born in Bootle into a family of dockers, and Melvyn Bragg, author, radio presenter and director of London Weekend Television, who Lord Bauer describes as being brought up "in the family pub" in Wigton, Cumberland.

Examples from the world of commerce include Joseph Lewis – described as Britain's richest man after making a fortune in currency dealing – who was born and brought up in an East End pub; Newcastle multi-millionaire Sir John Hall, the son of a miner; Ann Gloag, a former nurse

who co-founded the bus and train company Stagecoach; and Mark Dixon, son of an engineer, who left school at 16 to sell hamburgers and later founded Regus, now the world's largest provider of serviced offices.

Lord Bauer also refers to the relatively humble origins of prime ministers Harold Wilson, James Callaghan, Margaret Thatcher, and John Major. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, is the son of a hospital porter, while among the "elite" of the Civil Service the Permanent Secretary at the Treasury, Sir Terence Burns,

was born in a council house in a pit village. Lord Bauer also quotes the results from a study last year in which 52 per cent of a sample group had "moved class" in their lifetime.

The thrust of the pamphlet, published by the Centre for Policy Studies, sits uneasily with a book to be published next month called *A Class Act, the Myth of Britain's Classless Society* by Andrew Adonis and Stephen Pollard. This describes the emergence of a new "super class", an elite grouping "divorced" from the rest of

society by "wealth, education, values, residence and lifestyle".

However, the authors appear to square the circle with Bauer's thesis by admitting that this class has emerged in an "open" society where social mobility abounds.

The "super class" concept coincides with the views of historian and writer Sir Roy Strong – himself mentioned in the pamphlet – who regards the new Labour elite as its embodiment. "The Blairs are a monument to this new Establishment class," Sir Roy, who believes the impact of old-style class is waning, recalled an incident when he had applied for work at a museum. "I put down my father's occupation as commercial traveller. Someone told me not to, and instead put 'businessman'. At that time one felt very humble, and museums were incredibly class-bound. But I don't think that would happen now."

Mark Dixon, head of Regus, believes class does exist but provides "obstacles" rather than barriers. "If you have no contacts or education you just have to start from scratch and do it all yourself, but that can help – it makes you better at opening doors. And if you come from the bottom you have nothing to lose – and every move you make is a step up."

Class on the Brain – The Cost of a British Obsession; Centre for Policy Studies, 37 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3QL; £7.50

## Guilty as charged: the price of talking Brummie

The right of silence under police questioning takes on a whole new meaning as a result of research which shows that one regional accent can influence official perception of guilt or innocence. Richard Smith reports on bad news for West Midlands folk.



Berenice Mahoney: 'People are willing to use prejudice'

Simply speaking with a Birmingham accent makes it more than twice as likely that a suspect will be fingered for a crime, according to researchers. The findings have been made by three psychology lecturers from Worcester College of Higher Education who hired male actors to reproduce police interviews with suspected armed robbers and cheque fraudsters.

The actors used the Birmingham – or "Brummie" – accent and standard accents for the test and the suspect's guilt was judged by 119 students. The results showed a bigger bias against Brummie accents than was the case with differences in race.

"The Brummie suspect was regarded as less intelligent, more likely to be poor and working-class and less socially competent," said Berenice Mahoney.

Someone with a Brummie accent was more than twice as likely to be convicted of the crime than a suspect with a standard accent.

"Past research has tended to find that people who use regional accents are frequently seen as more friendly, warm and kind. But we didn't even find our Brummie was regarded in that way. The Brummie accent does come out particularly badly," said Dr Mahoney.

"Accents like Geordie and Mancunian seem to come out quite well but the Brummie has tended to stay along the bottom ... It's all to do with power and what's regarded as socially acceptable. What we found quite

startling was that people are willing to ... exercise their prejudices even when something as important as criminal guilt is involved."

Dr Mahoney warned: "This was a preliminary study and the results should be treated with caution. But it would be naive of us to think this is not happening with magistrates, police officers and jurors involved in the legal process. The extent to which it is happening is one of the things we need to establish."

"It's just another example of a prejudice we need to tackle. I don't think there is an easy solution but at least if people are aware it exists there is a chance of re-educating those involved in these decisions."

This is the first research in Britain linking regional accents with possible bias in the legal system.

John Dixon, one of Dr Mahoney's co-researchers, carried out a similar study in South Africa three years ago which found that someone using a regional dialect was more likely to be convicted of a blue-collar crime. But the results of the Worcester survey showed the Brummie accent was equally likely to be blamed for the white-collar cheque fraud as the blue-collar armed robbery.

The survey's findings will be presented at a British Psychological Society conference in Cambridge next week.

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flying  
to  
Paris



phew!  
I'M WHACKED.

I could really  
do without having  
to queue for a cab.

TOOK A LOT MORE  
OUT OF ME  
THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD.

That finished me off.  
all that stuff at the airport there.  
If I hadn't been

So

tired

I WOULD HAVE

"said"

something

TO THAT idiot

ON THE PLANE.

I could be home in an hour.

Yeah that would be good.

Exactly the wrong time for taxis though.

ALL THIS LOT ARE GOING TO WANT ONE

Got to get a cab before  
they're all gone.

THIS LOT don't deserve one,  
THEY HAVEN'T HAD  
THE DAY I'VE HAD.

COME ON!  
OUT OF MY  
WAY.

At least when I  
get one

relax

eurostar



relax

you've got a  
complimentary

taxi  
waiting for you.

premium

first

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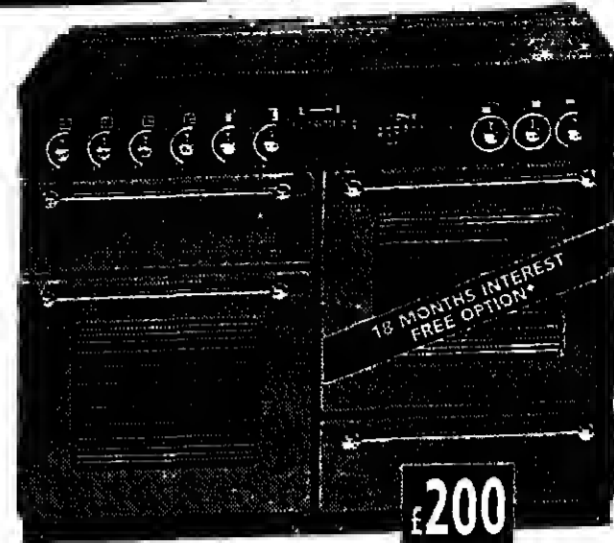
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**OTSEIN** Gas Hob  
A powerful burner.  
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## France acts to stamp out ritual humiliation of the new kids at school

Two teenagers have been expelled from a lycée in Orléans and 14 others suspended in Marseilles for 'bizutage' - ritual humiliation of new students. John Lichfield reports on the French government's pledge to eradicate a tradition which is disfiguring some of the top schools and colleges.

At the elite design school in Paris it is called *usage*. Each autumn, new students suffer months of ritual humiliation and torture: they are woken every few hours at night; they are forced to bolt their food; sexual insults are screamed into their ears by older students.

At the College Stanislas, a fashionable Catholic lycée in Paris, it is called the *Soupe de Stan*. The freshmen and women - *les bizouts* - are dressed in bin-liners and adult nappies and forced to drink soup made from pet food, chicken heads and pigs' legs.

They, it appears, are among the lucky ones. At elite lycées and colleges all over France, *bizutage* - the ritual initiation of the new pupils - has been growing increasingly vicious, often amounting to torture and sexual assault: slave auctions, stripings, sodomy with candles.

This autumn a pressure group of 17 parents, teachers and young people's organisations - backed by the League of Human Rights - has decided enough is enough, and begun a campaign to have the practice eradicated. The government agrees. It has sent a circular to all colleges and lycées threatening to suspend or sack staff who fail to crack down on *bizutages* and listing the legal penalties - up to five years' imprisonment - which could be brought to bear on perpetrators. A draft law against *bizutage* is expected to go before the National Assembly next month.

In the meantime, the schools minister, Ségolène Royale, has set up a help-line and urged victims to break the code of silence which has sheltered the ritual for years. There have already been some results. Following a complaint by a parent, two students at a lycée in Orléans have been ejected for organising the *bizutage* of new students wishing to join a judo class. Last year, male students had their genitals glued together; this year, there was an act of attempted sodomy with a fountain pen.

Fourteen students at one of the top lycées in Marseilles have been suspended following another complaint to the ministry. The pupils, including 11 girls, have admitted taking and distributing photographs of new girls in humiliating and partially undressed poses. Other complaints have been less chilling. One girl in Sarreguemines in Lorraine said she had been covered in flour and made to distribute pasta in the town centre.

The government campaign has been greeted with relief by many former students. A university professor, Jean Bernard, writing in *Libération*, said *bizutage* was "one of the most scandalous problems of our society". Not only were these "fantasies spewed from reptilian brains" tolerated in the country "which invented human rights", they were happening in the elite establishments.

A few people have stepped forward to justify *bizutage*; they speak of creating a sense of adulthood; of *esprit de corps*. The fact that it is most common at top establishments is not surprising: the elite form a kind of educationally selected, secret society and *bizutage* seems to be part of the entry requirement. But no one defends the more vicious practices of recent years.

Dozens of previous attempts have been made to abolish *bizutage*. But they failed to enlist the support of old pupils' associations, teachers or faculty members. They also failed to break down the codes of silence. At the Ecole nationale

supérieure des arts et métiers (ENSAM) in Paris (the country's premier design school) students who refuse to accept *bizutage* are declared "HU" - *hors usage* - and excluded from the year-book of students which is their passport to jobs.

Mrs Royale went to the Lycée Potier in Orléans last week after the student suspensions. She urged the students to revolt. "Have the courage to speak out without fear of reprisals or bullying," she said. "Don't be passive. Remember that denunciation is not betrayal. The law itself demands that you help people who are in danger."



Happy days for some, but a code of silence has ensured secret misery among generations of French students

Photograph: Katz Pictures

to hell with it,  
that'll do



well done!  
fourth time lucky!

come on,  
it was pretty tight

yep, it was an amazing display of  
sheer parking genius.

I didn't want to  
scuff the wheels, actually

o.k. see you later then  
sorry?

if I'm not at the kerb in  
15 minutes, go on without me



*Spirito di Punto*



The Punto ELX features a new 85 bhp, 16v engine, 6 speaker RDS stereo with steering wheel controls, driver's airbag, electric sunroof, electric front windows, remote central locking and now, power steering. So no excesses. Call 0800 71 7000. <http://www.fiat.co.uk> or visit your local Fiat dealer for more information.

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DRIVEN BY PASSION **FIAT**

## Maths teaching in inner-cities fails to make the grade

Inspectors have criticised maths teaching in inner cities - some schools are not even teaching times-tables.

They say educating deprived children is no excuse for low standards and warn that big variations in teaching quality must be addressed if Britain is to catch up with competing countries. Judith Judd, Education Editor, reports.

Maths standards in three inner-city local authorities are close to the national average but still much too low if we are to compete with other countries, says an inspectors' report published yesterday. All three authorities educate some of the most deprived children in Britain, but that, the report says, is no excuse for low standards.

The inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education found some excellent teaching but say that there should be more emphasis on mental arithmetic. In one school only 4 per cent of seven-year-olds could write down a two-digit number in words. In another, 93 per cent did this correctly. Even in classes where pupils were expected to rely on calculators they were not taught how to use them properly.

The study of seven- and eleven-year-olds in the London boroughs of Newham and Greenwich and Knowsley on Merseyside showed that seven-

year-olds achieved scores close to a national sample on specially devised tests, although 11-year-olds did less well. But the latest international study found that English nine-year-olds were only 10th out of 17 countries in maths, well behind those in the Pacific Rim.

The report says: "If our national standards are low, then schools scoring close to the national average must also have low standards." However, some schools, even in the poorest areas are already close to achieving the Government's targets, suggesting that the national target for maths is achievable. Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, said targets for pupils' performance needed to be under constant review if we were to match our competitors. "If we are not expecting enough in tests which children are set already and not stretching children's potential enough, we are not going to make up the gap with our international competitors," he said.

National test results out today will show progress towards the Government's goal of 75 per cent of pupils reaching the expected maths level by 2002.

Children from poor families who cannot read at the age of six are still benefiting from "reading recovery" schemes five years later, says a study from London University's Institute of Education. The research shows that reading recovery, which involves daily one-to-one tuition for 20 weeks, made no significant difference after five years to most children's reading but it did help the slowest readers who were on free school meals.



Chaos and  
war make  
poor

## God and mammon go to battle over the soul of a saint



Colourful past: A stained-glass image of St Boniface, who is set to be the patron saint of Europe, in a church window in Crediton, Devon, where he is the subject of a trademark dispute Photographs: Tim Cuff/Ape

An unholy row has broken out in the rural town of Crediton in Devon where a local businessman is trying to patent the name of its most famous celebrity, St Boniface. But the residents believe that no individual has the right to monopolise the name of a saint. Amanda Kelly reports.



Holy relics: Mugs commemorating the saint sell to tourists in his 'home town'

The presence of St Boniface can be felt all over the small rural town of Crediton, with statues, festivals and plaques set up in his honour and many of the town's souvenirs bearing his name. Every year hundreds of tourists flock to the town to pay their respects to the Saxon monk who is believed to have lived there in the late 7th century. But now the churchman, who is also the patron saint of Germany and the Netherlands, has become embroiled in a battle between God and mammon.

The storm erupted over a trademark application by Andrew Haigh, a businessman, to control the name of St Boniface. If successful, it means that any manufacturer or tourist body will have to seek his permission before they can use the saint's name. The move has sparked fury among local residents and the town council.

Town councillor Sally Beament said: "St

Boniface is the most famous figure to come out of Crediton and he is very important to the town. We are extremely concerned that if Mr Haigh gets the application approved, it would mean St Boniface's name could not be used in any tourist publication without his permission and, presumably, without paying. So at a council meeting this week we have decided to put in our own trademark application to protect St Boniface, and, if we are successful, we will not be after any financial gain at all."

Saints have been trademarked in the past, the case of St Michael and Marks & Spencer being the most famous example. But St Boniface, who is reputed to have thought up the Christmas tree, could become espe-

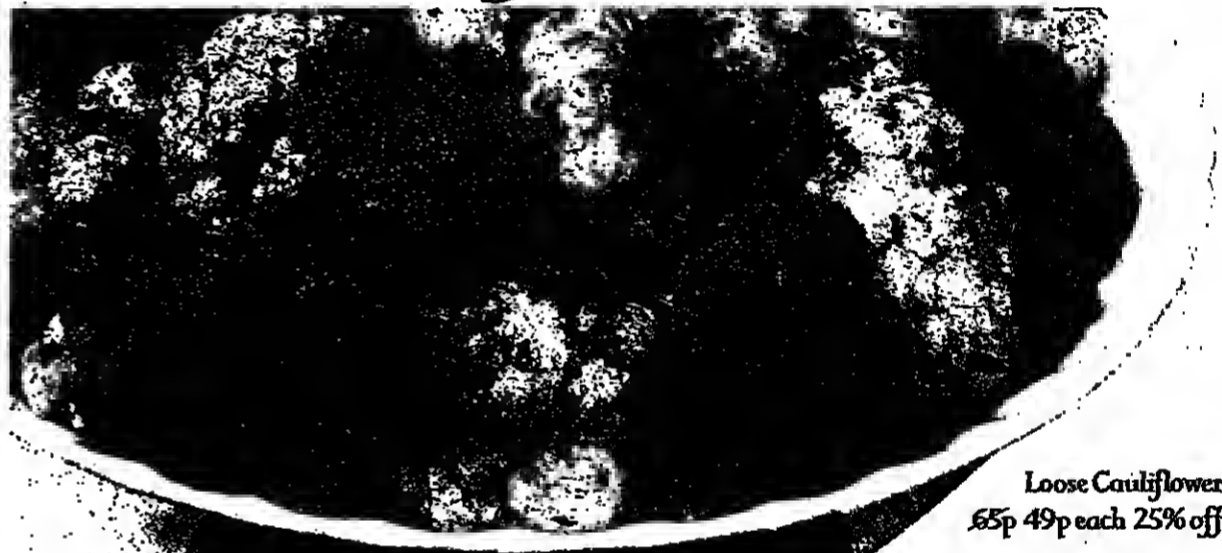
cially lucrative if plans to make him the patron saint of Europe are successful.

Professor Henry Mayr-Harting, Regius Professor of ecclesiastical history at Oxford University and a particular fan of St Boniface, said: "The idea that Boniface should be patroned for financial gain is dreadful ... I do, however, agree that it is quite fitting to make him the patron saint of Europe ... In my opinion, he had more influence in the life and politics of Europe than any other Englishman ever and it's pretty below the belt for one man to try and corner him for himself."

But Mr Haigh insists that he is not after personal gain. "I moved to Crediton three years ago," he said, "and it was a dead and dying town that needed to be uplifted. The only thing it has to market itself with is St Boniface and I explained this to the town council in 1995 but it didn't want to know, so I have done it myself. The Pope is being requested that St Boniface become the patron saint of the whole of Europe so ... the export potential is huge ... We are also trying to benefit a lot of other people along the way. We are setting up a scheme that will help small Devonshire manufacturers to sell their goods, as well as helping to market the town itself."

"Some of the licensing funds will also go to an education fund to help underprivileged children. But I personally will not make a single penny out of all this."

## Sainsbury's pick of fresh vegetables, fresh offers and fresh ideas.



Loose Cauliflower  
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### Warm Cauliflower and Broccoli Salad with Green Herb Dressing.

Bring a pan of water to the boil and cook 10oz (275g) of broccoli florets and 9oz (250g) of cauliflower florets for about 4 minutes. Chop 3 rashers of bacon and fry until crisp.

Meanwhile, put 1/2 a pack each of fresh flat parsley, fresh mint and fresh basil, a clove of garlic, 1 tablespoon of Dijon mustard and 1 tablespoon of capers into a food processor. Blend, adding 3 tablespoons of olive oil and a tablespoon of lemon juice. Season to taste.

Drain the vegetables and put into a serving dish. Pour dressing over and sprinkle the bacon on top. Leave for 10 minutes before serving.

At Sainsbury's, you'll also find Sugar Snap Peas, Spinach, Mangetout, loose Cauliflower and Baby Corn on offer, so you won't have to dig too far into your pocket.

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## Cult figure with a frosty touch who brings destruction to Hungary's vineyards

Winfrid of Wessex, "Apostle of the Germans", met his death in the tiny Friesian village of Dokkum on 5 June in the year of 754. According to semi-historical legend, he was "struck down" by heathens, although the precise circumstances of his demise are shrouded in mystery.

His life in the German-speaking lands is better documented, however. Bonifatius, as he is known in his adopted

land, had come to preach the Gospel to Germans in 716, making his way south from the Friesian islands, and leaving his mark in Hesse, Thuringia and Bavaria.

In 722, he was made a bishop in recognition for his work among the Germans. He went on to consolidate the church's power in Salzburg, Freising, Passau, Regensburg, and founded parishes in Erfurt and Würzburg. In 747 he took over

as Bishop of Mainz, the southern German city which remains a bastion of Catholicism in Germany.

Bonifatius the Holy is buried in the crypt of the cathedral of Fulda, the focus of his cult. Hundreds of churches, schools, kindergartens and libraries across Germany bear his name, and the date of his death is venerated as a holy day.

Not all of Catholic Europe

is in awe of this son of Devon. In Hungarian folklore, Bonifatius is the third and last of the "frosty saints", bringing destruction to vineyards on his holy day almost every year.

If the vintage is poor, Bonifatius and the other two rogue saints invariably get the blame. Whatever else he might be in Germany and Devon, in Hungary Bonifatius is the patron saint of plunk.

— Imre Karas



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## Bombing truth is held captive in village under siege

Israel says it has identified the four suicide bombers who killed 20 Israelis in Jerusalem as coming from the Palestinian village of Azira Shamaliya on the West Bank. The village has been sealed off for five days. Patrick Cockburn evades Israeli troops to talk to relatives of the alleged bombers and the Palestinian head of security who fears an all-out Israeli assault.

The siege lines are drawn tight around the Palestinian village of Azira Shamaliya, which Israel says was home to four young men in their twenties who blew themselves up in Jerusalem, killing 20 other people.

"There is going to be a massacre here," says Major Hamad Sultani Rajeb, the head of the Palestinian Preventive Security police in this village of 10,000 Palestinians, as he trains his military binoculars at an Israeli patrol blocking the road half a mile away. "They tried to come into

Azira early this morning to arrest three people they would not name and we stopped them."

Israeli troops surrounded

side of a steep hill just north of the West Bank city of Nablus, last Saturday night, searching for relatives of the four suicide bombers who had blown them-

selves up on 30 July and 4 September. They were seeking relatives of the suspected bombers both to interrogate, and to provide DNA samples. Late on

Tuesday, the office of Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, suddenly announced Israel knew the identity of at least three of the bombers who had attacked Mahane Yehuda market and Ben Yehuda pedestrian mall. It named Mou'ia Jara'a, Bashar Zoualha and Tawafik Yassin, all from Azira Shamaliya, and said that another local man, Yusef Shouli, was suspected of being the fourth bomber. The facts are not easy to check. Every road and track around the village is cut off by an Israeli checkpoint.

The West Bank is a curious checkerboard of competing authorities. In Azira Shamaliya the Palestinian Authority is in theory in charge of civilian matters, while security is still handled by Israel, as it is in every so-called "Area B" - a district of joint control set up for the interim stage of the Oslo accords. It is only in cities such as nearby Nablus that Palestinians exercise full control. But the real situation

is very different. In practice, the Palestinian Authority has security control of every West Bank village on a day-to-day basis. Using a grocery store in a nearby village as their headquarters, two members of the Palestinian Preventive Security were watching developments in Azira Shamaliya. They said they knew of one road which the Israelis were not guarding. This turned out to be a dirt track winding along the floor of a dry wadi for three or four miles between the olive groves.

We were not the only ones to know that the Israeli siege of the village had a hole in it. Coming in the opposite direction through a cloud of dust came a car driven by Hassan Shouli, a tractor driver, who said he had come to look for food for his family. Asked about the alleged suicide bombers, Mr Shouli added: "Actually, I am related to all four of them. I can't really tell you whether what the Israelis say is true or not. I haven't seen any of them for

some time. But I don't think the Israelis are absolutely certain because they are still looking for people."

This is probably true. The Israeli press said the Israeli army and the Shin Bet intelligence service were amazed by the announcement by Mr Netanyahu's office giving details of the investigation before it was completed. Their main interest is to identify not only the bombers, but also to unravel their network and discover the names of the leaders of Hamas, the Islamic militant movement, who gave them their orders.

Mr Netanyahu's agenda is rather different. He wants to prove to international, and above all US opinion, that Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, is not liquidating the infrastructure of Izzedine al-Qassem, the military wing of Hamas.

The official announcement said all four of the alleged suicide bombers were wanted by Shin Bet for questioning re-

An Israeli victim of three Palestinian suicide bombers who blew themselves up in Jerusalem on 4 September. Israeli security forces have sealed off the village they claim is the home of the bombers. Photograph: Nari Shohat

garding their involvement in a shooting at an army patrol at Ein Bidan near Nablus in December 1996, in which an army doctor and a soldier were wounded.

Israel says the four men were arrested by the Palestinian Authority after the suicide bombings in early 1996, but had escaped from Nablus prison in September. The official statement adds that the four young men from Azira Shamaliya were among 88 alleged members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, another Islamic militant organisation, given to the Palestinians for arrest after the Mahane Yehuda bombing.

In the village, the families of the alleged bombers adamantly denied that their sons were dead. Fathi Yassin, with seven sons and six daughters, said: "My son didn't do it. My son is not a terrorist. I think you will see him later." Asked if she expected her house to be demolished by Israel, she said: "My house is not better than my son. Before they knock it down they should show me his body to prove that he is dead."

In Jerusalem Mr Netanyahu was claiming the suicide bombers had got their orders from Hamas in Nablus, which is under Mr Arafat's control. The Palestinian leader, receding from his claim that the bombers had come from abroad, said that in any case Azira Shamaliya was under Israeli security control.

Both sides are wrong. If Israel had full security control of the village it would not be necessary to besiege it. The reality of power in Azira Shamaliya has already passed into Palestinian hands.

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## Key motion could lift Ulster talks out of the trenches

Substantive negotiations on Northern Ireland's future appear ready to open on Monday as the multi-party talks looked set to surmount a significant hurdle. David McKitterick reports.

The British and Irish governments and eight of the ten Northern Ireland parties were last night looking close to clearing the last procedural hurdle which stands in the way of

serious political negotiations. They were about to agree the terms of a key motion, prepared by the two governments which is designed to catapult the talks out of the procedural trench warfare in which they have been embroiled since July of last year.

If the agreement on the motion is reached, it will signal the end of the protracted "talks about talks phase" and open the way for real political negotiation.

The British government is expected to reject an Ulster Unionist Party demand for the expulsion of Sinn Féin on the grounds

that the party contained "unreconstructed terrorists" who remained uncommitted to principles of non-violence and democracy. Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, is likely to declare that the party had not breached the six Mitchell principles.

Despite protests, David Trimble's Ulster Unionists, are almost certain to accept the ruling, having committed themselves by making it clear that they would remain in the talks process even if they lost out on the expulsion issue.

It was also expected that the Canadian general, John de Chastelain, would head the international body which is to deal with the issue of arms decommissioning in parallel with the political talks.

Opinions differed yesterday on whether the decommissioning issue, on which the Ulster Unionist Party had once laid so much store, had effectively been set aside or had simply been parked to be the subject of further controversy at a later stage.

The governments' procedural motion has the effect of moving the talks on from

agenda item 2A, concerning decommissioning, where they had been lodged for almost a year. The talks are going on in the absence of two secondary Unionist parties, the Rev Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionists and Robert McCartney's UK Unionists.

The substantive negotiations have been organised into three strands dealing with the internal administration of Northern Ireland, North-South relations and overarching relations between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

Mr Trimble said that his party would continue to campaign for the removal of Sinn Féin. He declared: "This was not just a one-off gesture on our part. If they do not exclude Sinn Féin now we will come back to this issue again and again and we are quite confident that other facts will come out."

"The facts are not available on the Market Hill bomb yet, but they will be soon. We will come back to this issue - it is not just Sinn Féin that is on trial, it is the Labour government that is on trial."

## Irvine defies Cabinet line on pay to keep ahead of judges

The Lord Chancellor is taking a £35-a-week pay increase from 1 December, in spite of Tony Blair's appeal for pay restraint from the Cabinet. Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent, says Lord Irvine of Lairg is more worried about his differential over judges than setting an example for public sector pay.

Lord Irvine, who was heavily criticised for allowing an expensive refurbishment of his official residence at Westminster, is refusing to toe the Cabinet line over his pay.

The Lord Chancellor will take a pay increase of £1,800 in December to a total £142,508 in spite of the appeals for pay restraint by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, the Chancellor. "The Lord Chancellor will not be waiving the 1 December increase. The link with the Lord Chief Justice's salary as prescribed by statute, will be maintained," said a spokesman for the Lord Chancellor's office.

Under a 1991 ministerial salaries act, the Lord Chancellor receives £2,500 more than the Lord Chief Justice, and Lord Irvine intends to make sure that gap is maintained.

He served notice that he will keep his differential over the judiciary by taking another rise next April, following the recommendations of the senior salaries review body, which is due to report in January.

Lord Irvine's action may be

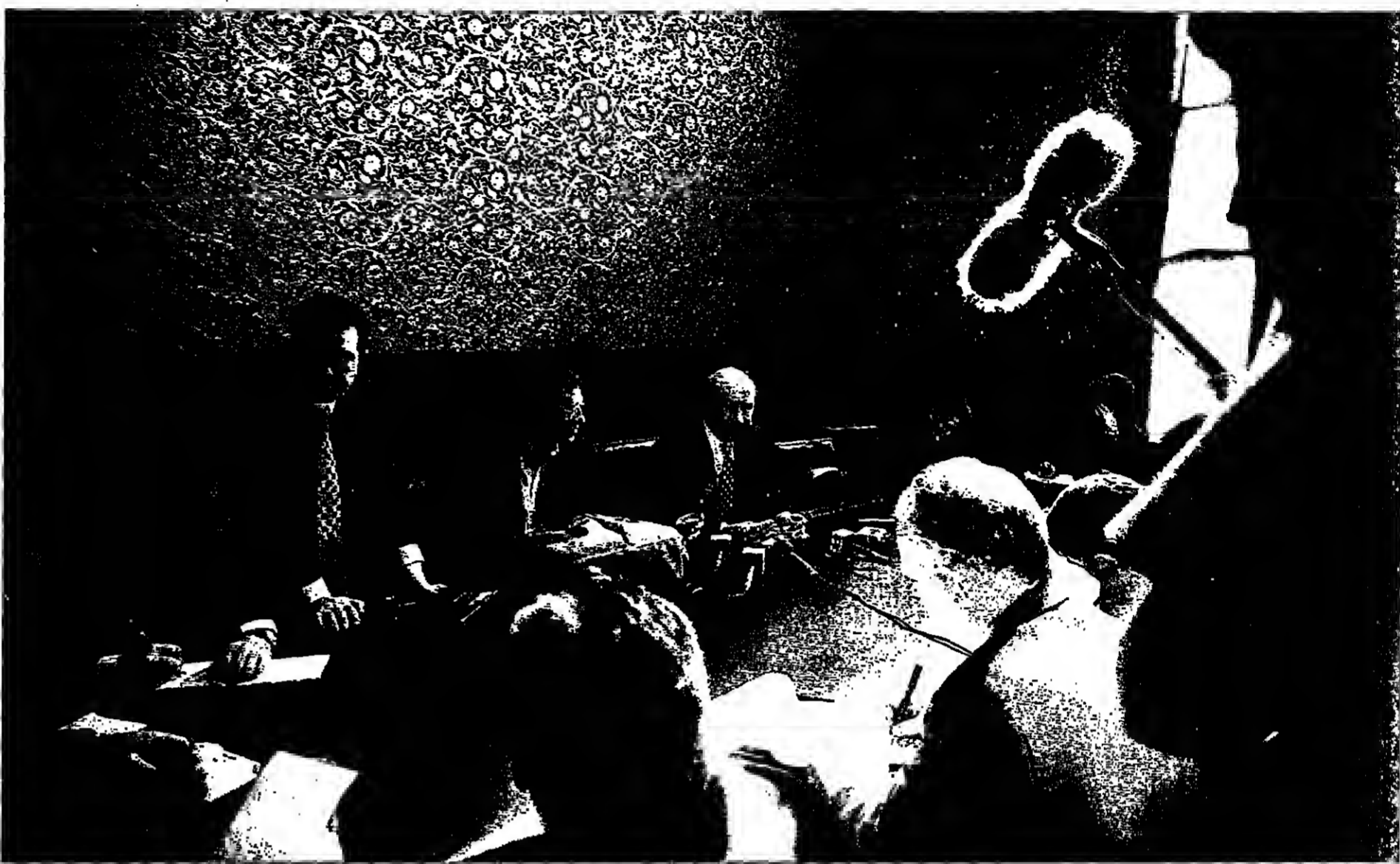
seen as flouting the lead given by the Prime Minister and it may ruffle more Cabinet feathers. John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, has had the task of reaching a Cabinet consensus to forgo their pay increases of £16,000 and a deal could be announced today setting out new linkage with civil servants to avoid further embarrassment for Cabinet ministers.

The confusion over Cabinet pay brought another broadside yesterday from John Redwood, the Tory trade spokesman. He said: "Given all that these politicians have said about fat cats and large pay awards in the past I find it extraordinary there should be any argument. These politicians should turn down the money and leave more cash for our hospitals instead."

"Derry" Irvine is a close friend of the Blairs - the Prime Minister and his wife Cherie met as student barristers in Lord Irvine's chambers - and he is being given special dispensation to break the Cabinet line on pay.

It was confirmed that having given up a reported £500,000 from a lucrative legal practice to take office in the Government as the country's senior law officer, Lord Irvine's main concern was to keep up the differentials between his own salary and those of the judges.

In April, the salary went up from £134,678 to £140,665 while his Tory predecessor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, was still in office. No press release was issued by the Lord Chancellor's department but an "information sheet" was made available for anyone who raised questions with Lord Irvine's office about his pay.



Pat Lally, Lord provost of Glasgow city council, surrounded by microphones at a press conference after the suspensions yesterday

Photograph: Photo News

## Lord Provost holds onto his post after Labour suspension

Pat Lally, the Lord Provost of Glasgow city council, remained defiant last night, saying he would continue in his elected position in spite of being suspended from acting as a Labour councillor. Pledging to clear his name, he said: "There is no reason why I should not continue as Lord Provost and I certainly intend to continue."

Mr Lally was one of nine councillors yesterday suspended by the Labour's ruling national executive (NEC), with only Dennis Skinner and

Diane Abbott voting against, following a hard-hitting report into the allegations, which included claims of councillors offering their votes in the council in return for foreign junkets. Mr Skinner said later that there was insufficient evidence. The former leader Jean McFadden was appointed acting leader until elections in the Labour group in three weeks' time.

The NEC heard that in addition to using the funds for trips, there were threats of violence

made against Labour councillors by their colleagues; and breaches of the rules for the declaration of interests. The nine councillors will be given a hearing, but those found guilty of bringing the party into disrepute could be expelled.

Mr Lally was among five councillors who were suspended from the Labour group, but not from all posts in the party. The others were Bob Gould, the Labour group leader; Gordon Macdiarmid, Alex Mossion, and Jim Mutter, the parks and

recreation convenor. Four others who were suspended from all roles in the party were: Elaine Smith, Deirdre Gaughan, Heather Ritchie and Jim Sharkey.

In a separate move the Labour NEC also endorsed the suspension of the Labour MP Tommy Graham, following the allegations of a smear campaign in a suicide note by Gordon McMaster, the MP for Paisley South.

— Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent

## Prescott remains unconvinced by advocates of electoral reform

Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott yesterday set his face against reform of the voting system in local government. Colin Brown says that after the chumminess shown towards Paddy Ashdown, Mr Prescott provides an antidote.

"I'm not a fan of PR," John Prescott declares in a pre-conference interview. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and

the Regions does not want proportional representation in local government, but he makes it clear he will take a lot of persuading before he accepts it for Westminster.

PR could be one of the sticking points in the coming year for his loyalty. Tony Blair has shown a readiness to draw the Liberal Democrats into the Government, but he too has said he has yet to be persuaded about the advantages of PR for the Commons.

That has not stopped speculation that the momentum is gathering for PR in Westminster, with the possibility that Lord Jenkins, the Liberal De-



mocrat peer, could be appointed to head a review within the next few weeks.

The Deputy Prime Minister sets himself against PR for local government in the New Statesman before next week's

annual Labour Party Conference, where Mr Prescott is set to be one of the stars of the celebratory show.

He also sets out the difficulties which will delay the implementation of regional

government with directly elected authorities until after the next election. "In England you need to do something about the local government structure, which makes it much more difficult."

"In the early 1980s I argued for a two-tier structure but then you have to ask - what is the role for the counties? Then there is the question of boundaries. Is Cumberland in the North-west or the North-east? Arguments such as this have always plagued this debate... So in my mind, establishing proper regional assemblies, based on local accountability, is a matter for the back end of this Parliament or the next term."

He does not deny that there have been tensions involving other ministers over the compromise plan to go forward with regional assemblies appointed from councils but says they have been based on misunderstandings.

"There have been matters of real concern for David [Blunkett] and Margaret [Beckett] but we have made it clear in discussions with them that this isn't a bid for development agencies to take over everything that's regional. The departments will still retain the budgets. The chambers would work within frameworks laid down by central government."

## Salmond calls for co-operation politics as Scots begin to cut apron strings

The Scottish National Party is preparing for a constructive role in the halfway house of a devolved parliament. Stephen Goodwin is at the SNP's conference in Rothesay.

To the casual observer at Rothesay pier yesterday Alex Salmond must have looked like a political leader who had independence in his grasp.

As he greeted colleagues getting off the Caledonian MacBrayne ferry from the mainland, a piper played (Scotland's Brave, inevitably) and the glistening Firth of Clyde

was millpond calm. Party officials were quick to liken the scene to the mood of the party. This year has seen the SNP double its number of MPs to six, despite the Labour tide, and a more convincing than expected vote of approval for a Scottish parliament.

But with a possible place in the coalition that will run as Scotland's first home-rule administration, assuming PR elections result in no party having overall control, Mr Salmond is playing a cautious game.

At a press conference yesterday he indicated an interest in collaborating with the Liberal Democrats in a Scottish parliament while also defending Donald Dewar, Secretary of State for Scotland, against sug-

gestions that he should have been aware of the troubles within Glasgow Labour Party. Mr Salmond announced he was writing to Mr Dewar and other party leaders in Scotland proposing formal talks on how the new parliament should operate. If the parties could agree on procedures such as working hours and scrutiny of proposals rather than point-scoring, then Scotland's first parliament in 300 years need not spend its first six months navel-gazing, Mr Salmond said.

The four-day conference would begin the process of developing what Mr Salmond called a "radical and exciting policy agenda" for the first elections to the Scottish parliament in 1999.

## Climate set for modernising Plaid Cymru leaders to seize the Welsh political agenda

Welsh nationalism is on a roll. Last week's referendum result has boosted Plaid Cymru. Its annual conference begins today and the party is in an optimistic mood, says Tony Heath.

The time is right for Plaid Cymru to seize the Welsh political agenda, the party's leadership said yesterday.

Plaid Cymru's part in securing a "yes" vote in last week's devolution referendum - when voters in traditional nationalist areas and Labour strongholds in the valleys combined to deliver a slim major-

ity for an elected assembly - is cited with satisfaction by Marc Phillips, the party chairman.

Speaking on the eve of the conference in Aberystwyth, Mr Phillips, 43, a moderniser and pragmatist looked forward to a change in the political weather. "Plaid Cymru is now operating in a different atmosphere. The script is about an assembly taking office in Cardiff in a couple of years' time. This is our opportunity to seize the Welsh political agenda," he declared yesterday.

Some of the conference's own agenda would find approval with the Labour left. There are calls for a minimum wage of £4.26 an hour, the decommissioning of Trident and a revision of immigration laws.

Nine of the 39 resolutions for debate at the mid-Wales resort in the next 48 hours mention the Welsh language. That is an admission that with the setting up by the Tory government of the Welsh Language Board chaired by Lord Elis-Thomas, a former nationalist MP, cultural peace has broken out.

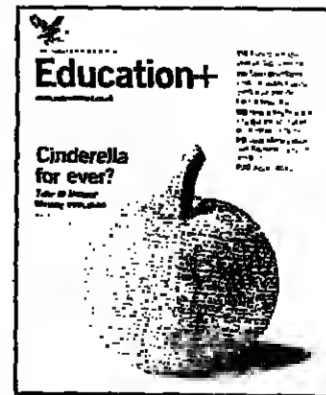
None of this distracts the nationalists from concentrating on 1999 when elections to both the Welsh Assembly and the European Parliament are due.

Dafydd Wigley MP, the party president, is optimistic: "We start from a good performance at the general election when against the huge Labour tidal wave sweeping Wales we held our four seats and increased our vote in target constituencies."

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## Will Norman Foster and Anthony Caro cross the Thames in a blaze of glory?

The Millennium Bridge, from St Paul's to the Tate at Bankside, would be a wondrous sight and a wondrous walk. It would also be the first Norman Foster work to have a dramatic presence in London. But, writes *Norie Niesewand*, before it can be built, Southwark and the Corporation of the City of London both must say yes, and there are few bodies more different in wealth and taste.

It would be like a blade of light skimming the Thames, a footbridge 300 metres long and four metres wide from the riverfront steps of St Paul's to the new Tate at Bankside.

Slender as it is, this tightrope of a suspension bridge will have no Indiana Jones tilt and sway – the vibration, one quiver in three seconds, will be unnoticeable. Though anchored on two slender concrete piers, the Thames's two seven-metre tides a day will leave it unmoved. It will cost £10m, a little more than building a four-storey office block; £5m of it National Lottery money, matched by another £5m from sponsors (Southwark Council has already put up £1m). Subject to planning permission from Southwark and City Corporation of London it will open as a footbridge in the summer of 2000.

Designed by Norman Foster with the sculptor Anthony Caro and the engineer Chris Wise of Ove Arup, it emerged as winner of the competition run last year by *The Financial Times* in the face of 220 entries from all over the world, including the great Frank Gehry. You can see why they all entered – the chance to span the Thames at such a spot is a fabulous opportunity for an architect. Whether other people – local residents and councils and City types – are similarly enthused is another matter.

Bridges make connections. They bridge gaps, but some gaps are more difficult than others. Take, for example, the difficulty of ever getting things built when two planning committees from two highly contrasting boroughs have to reach the same decision: the richest borough in London, City Corporation, and the poorest, Southwark. People on either side of the river have been invited to public exhibitions of the winning scheme. They have studied the bridge proposals at RIBA and at St Paul's at present the Millennium Bridge proposal is on view at the Design Museum in London – and many have willingly commended it.

Detractors are mainly in the City and mostly fretting about the view of St Paul's on the river. Actually, it opens up the view of St Paul's from the river but those using under the bridge in a boat will lose sight of St Paul's for a nano-second when a concrete pier blocks it. An architect to have built a lot on the waterfront, Piers Ough, expressed his reservations about a need for a new bridge over the Thames at the English Heritage brainstorm session this summer. "Is there any doubt it's a one-stop bridge bringing tourists the new Tate?" he asked. As it will be the world's largest gallery and MORI present over six million people a year between Paul's and Bankside, that would be some stop.

In any case, Gough's interpretation is highly questionable. As David Bell, chairman of Pearsons, and chief executive of

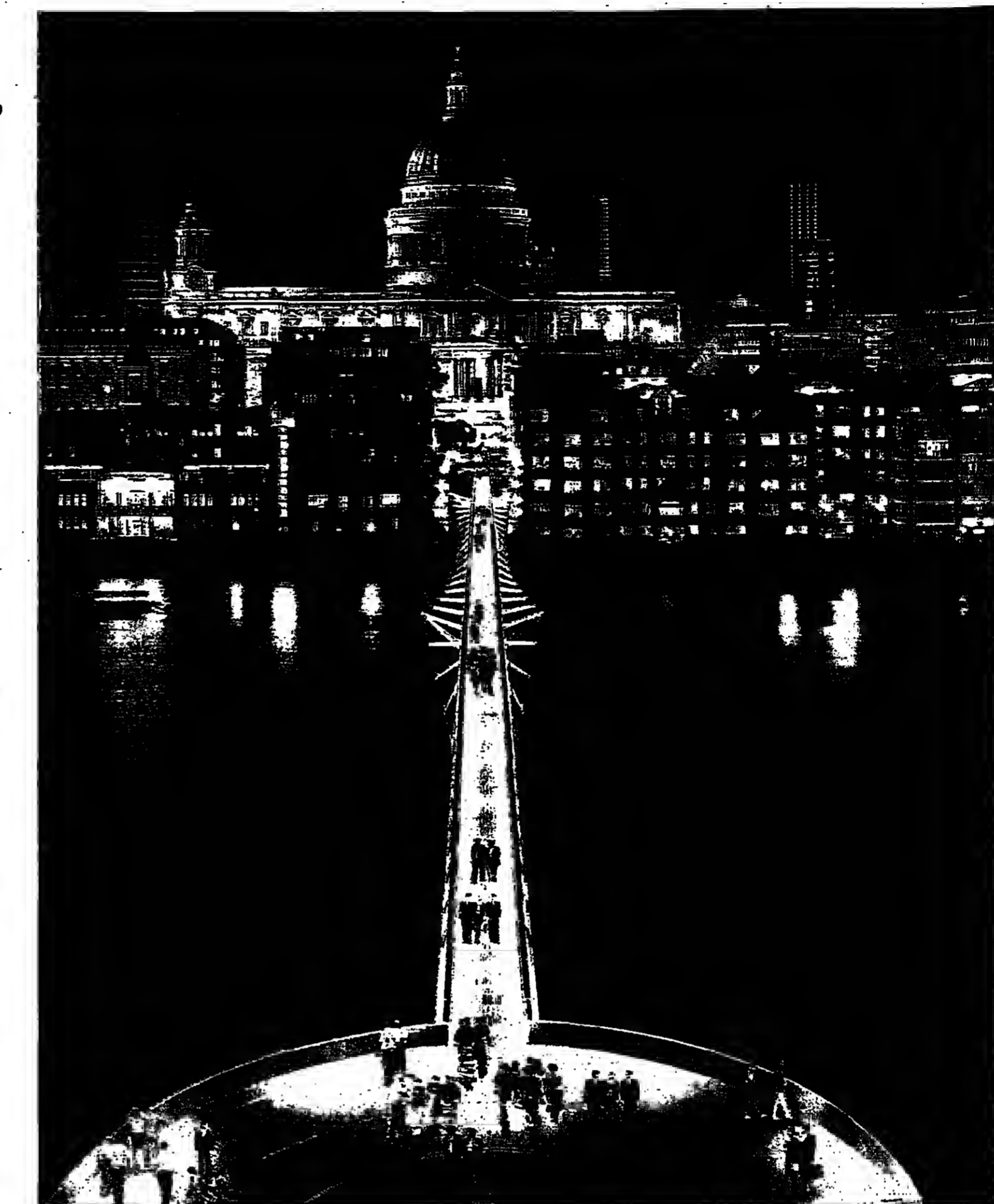
*The Financial Times* which sponsored the competition, is anxious to point out, the Millennium Mile on the riverfront to which the bridge would lead has plenty of "stops", from the County Hall aquarium at one end and the Globe and the Rose theatres at the other, as well as the Lambeth Palace gardens, the proposed wheel and the Lido for which planning application has been made. Waterloo terminus and a new Imax cinema. Besides, people from both sides of the river will walk to work across it. True, there will be an enclosed pedestrian crossing on the Blackfriars Bridge road and rail link nearby, but crossing that will hardly be an experience of the same order.

"The bridge will link two sides of the Thames at a historic point and give free access to the largest gallery in Europe. It will be the most permanent symbol of the millennium in the city. The Millennium Bridge is very beautiful and of our age. It will last," says Bell.

It will also be an opportunity, the first, for Norman Foster, the greatest British architect this century, to build something really eye-catching in the capital. The buildings for which Foster is famous are all abroad, buildings such as the waterfront Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, and the Olympic telecommunications tower piercing the blue skies of Barcelona like a javelin. Admittedly London does sport his Sackler Gallery extension at the Royal Academy, and a gem of a building it is, but too small and concealed to be a landmark.

But these days it is not enough for architects to design the world's most beautiful buildings or bridges. They have to sell them as well. To Fine Arts, to English Heritage, the lottery funding, sponsors to match any lottery money, and patrons if they don't get either. All summer Daniel Libeskind has been on his feet at the Victoria & Albert Museum, waving an origami-like paper model of his Spiral to win over critics and talk through their fears on his proposed extension there. Stamina is what the V&A looked for when they told him his competition entry had won. The bigger the name, the bigger the hassle. So Norman Foster, who put together a slide show on the Millennium Bridge to present designs, has put in more performances than a star actor playing in repertoire at the National Theatre. Now his stand-in, Andy Bow from Foster Associates, delivers the lecture complete with laser pen pinpointing the slides. It starts off unthreateningly with brown sugar cubes balanced on pieces of paper and tea-spoons across the void, which explains the relaxed way in which all three work together. Norman Foster recalls the thrill of "walking on water in a blade of light," which is the way that Anthony Caro infused them with the magic of the project in the first place.

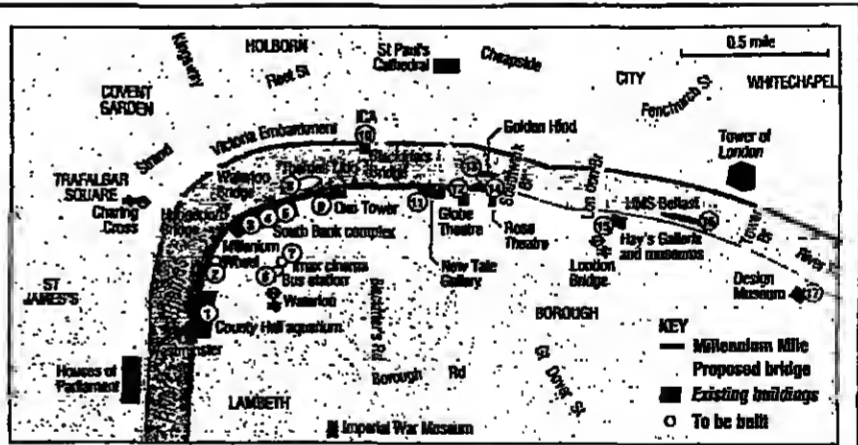
As the project has evolved, and changes have been made to accommodate the judges and respond to public concerns, there have been many changes. First, the bridge was spanned in glass but people feared they'd slip, so now it is decked in teak. A backlit glass panel runs the length of the 300 metres, bank to bank, because that strip of light makes people feel more secure. Chris Wise had to address fears about the wind in mid-crossing on a bad day, so the bridge was tested twice in Canadian wind tunnels at fierce velocities and as a consequence the balustrade thickened and curved to deflect currents. Anthony Caro's sculptural entrances to the bridge came under re-



view for wheelchair access – no changes in level or stairs – and unexpectedly, for their art. Nicholas Serota of the Tate and de Meuron, his architect for Bankside, didn't want the curvaceous cog-like Caro sculpture that was planned to stand on the sculpture forecourt of the new Bankside and anchor the suspension cables. So Caro wistfully replaced it with a boulder on that side and has set to work to design two gateway pavilions to mark the St Paul's side. With good humour, the Gladiatorial team have shown that they can listen and adapt the Millennium Bridge design. The only criticism that they have been unable to answer is that people may want to jump off it.

### MILLENNIUM MILE

Those who cross this bridge from St Paul's (if bridge there be) will walk on to a South Bank packed with pleasures. In the Eighteenth century Londoners went south of the river for their amusements; momentarily they did so again in 1951 for the Festival of Britain but, since then, pace Ken Livingstone and Tony Banks's efforts, people have gone there exclusively for high culture. Come the millennium, however, it will, as this map shows, be irresistible in the variety of its pleasures



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### STIRLING PRIZE

The pick of British architecture now

A boat house, a Parisian flat, student digs at Trinity and the shop at Lord's cricket ground are among the 52 buildings chosen today for their architectural merit by the Royal Institute of British Architects.

It is only the second year of category awards in houses and housing, conservation, commercial, health, education and leisure buildings, and civic and community centres. The winners of each category will be shortlisted for the Stirling Prize to be announced at the end of November, and on 3 November all 52 projects will be exhibited at Riba. They make up an instant photo-fit of what's happening in building around the country and in Europe.

Urban regeneration is a constant theme, with a Victorian stone water tank in Huddersfield skilfully converted by Mark Lee into a roundhouse. The old Luma lighting factory in Glasgow turned into 43 apartments by Cornelia McClymont Architects meant changing the windows to put two extra floors into the high-ceilinged plant. Built in 1938 to coincide with the Empire Exhibition, the factory was derelict. Now its white,

rationalist facade is a handsome addition to Glasgow. The sympathetic restoration by Lifschutz Davidson of London's landmark Oxo building on the Thames repackages a redundant warehouse as community housing with designer studios and the Harvey Nichols restaurant on top. An advertising coup when built in the 1930s, with the windows spelling out the name of the beef extract warehoused there, the Oxo building today signals changing demographics: fewer beef eaters, more community housing.

There are some firsts. The first lottery-funded project to be awarded architecturally is the King's Lynn Corn Exchange. Levitt Bernstein Associates turned the Grade II listed building dating from 1854 into an adaptable arts centre with two riverfront theatres fitted with hydraulic platforms and retractable seats. A bit of lottery money was used to rig out the interiors of Belfast Waterfront Hall by Robinson & Mellwaine – and to light it – but none went into the building.

Also for the first time Riba included across all the categories buildings by British ar-

chitects in Europe. A chic Parisian flat by Mark Guard, a young architect adept at turning tiny spaces into penthouses on low budgets, proves that it is possible to make an eight-metre by four-metre apartment in a Thirties block look spacious. His glass, steel and wooden interiors have a cool contemporary metropolitan feel.

Small houses in the private sector prove that people are more positively disposed towards architects. Some patrons use architects on tiny projects almost as high art. Original sash windows used as a niche for sculpture in the light-filled conversion by Suckland Coome of a gloomy basement dining room in London have "the quality of a Ben Nicholson," Riba judges said.

There are monuments, too, like the handsome pale green steel and glass train depot by Chris Wilkinson at Stratford on the extended Jubilee line in London. This is the first celebration of the Jubilee jam-boree and there is so much happening that by the end of the century Jubilee buildings could well be in their own category.

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# A modest proposal: try eating with the television off

What does Mary Whitehouse often do while she's eating dinner? She watches television (if there's something suitable on, of course). John Sessions, on the other hand, never does. These days there are more of us who behave like her than him. And more's the pity, says Nicholas Roe. He thinks that it is high time that we put aside our remote controls, got back round the table and talked to each other.

John Sessions is spewing out a torrent of bile which sums up his opinion of society's most pervasive vice. Sex? Cars? Drugs? No. The thing that really scares actor Sessions is... eating dinner in front of the telly.

"I hate it," he fizzes. "I did it last night with friends, they asked me for a meal and there was a lot of telly blaring and I didn't like it at all. Television is the opiate of mealtimes. It's a mainline narcotic which I avoid. I'm one of those people who select what they watch - maybe 10 programmes a week. Why do people do it? Because it takes away the awful silences. When you can think of nothing to say to your wife or children you are comforted by the fact that you can cast an eye on Dale Winton..."

Here's the sting: if you think Sessions is over the top then you are part of a new and growing moral majority. A survey for market analysts Key Note recently found that two-thirds of Britons eat their evening meal in front of the television and the trend is increasing. The family meal is dying on its sofa. All those eod-of-day catch-ups; all that witty banter. Gone.

There's a confusion here, surely? When Sessions erupts he is voicing something that is probably instinctive in all of us - because telly-dining arguably threatens virtues we would otherwise support: communication, the sensible division of pleasures, family life...

Yet everybody's at it. Not just on paper, and not just the masses. Researching this article I spoke to a leading mem-

ber of the Arts Council, an entrepreneur, a literary agent, a nutritionist, and a most ironically of all - that arch campaigner against TV values, Mary Whitehouse. All admitted that to some degree they are guilty of TV dining.

My own feeling is that Sessions is right: the habit threatens to make Teletubbies of us all. But in the face of that kind of evidence it is clearly time to look at the defence. And the fact is, it's impressive.

Item: Juliet Burton. She's a pleasant, attractive London literary agent with a husband and nine-year-old daughter to go home to. But does she TV-dine? "Yes," she says. "I'm embarrassed to say it but I have to be honest. I would say, five nights out of seven. Usually, my daughter Gemma will have her grub and sit in front of the TV and I'm drinking heavily while Michael will still be working upstairs... and then usually, we'll have ours watching telly too."

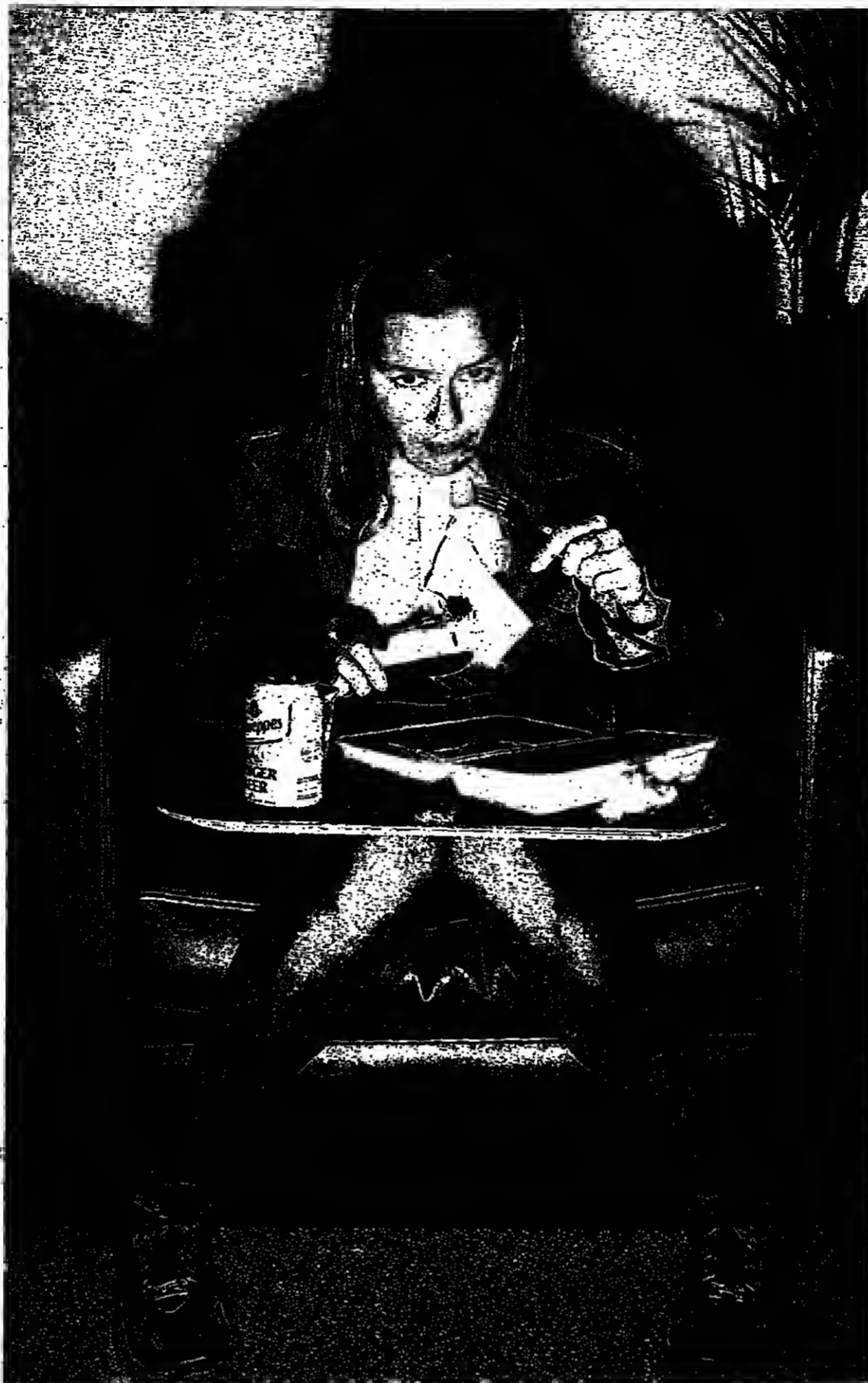
Why? "It's a habit we got into when we went out all the time and were over at home in the evening. We would be out at the pub - even at cultural events - and get home and have a quick snack in front of the TV. That's how it started. Then when Gemma was born we stopped going out but the habit was ingrained by then."

So it's the product of an active social life, clearly tweaked by exhausting days. Fair enough, though Ms Burton admits: "I think it's pretty awful," and when you ask why not stop and just talk, she says, "We talk over telly all the time anyway."

Move on. Gillian Brierley is development manager for the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. She's 30, lives alone and eats at home maybe three times a week. "I do eat in front of the telly when I'm by myself," she admits. "Not always, but the majority of the time."

Why? "Eating in silence makes you terribly aware that you are by yourself and silence can be quite a harrowing thing." How about music? "Television is more instantly engaging than the radio. It's right there in your face."

So TV is a partner, too. The virtues mount. Gavin Henderson is principle of Trinity College of Music, and chairman of the Arts Council's music pan-



Photograph: Tony Buckingham

el. "I'm married to a TV producer so to that extent TV features in our lives, except I don't watch very much," he says. "But when I do, it is true, I tend to eat with it. It tends to be a video because I go to live music programmes almost every night and it tends to be with a take-away Chinese meal."

Isn't he, of all any people, ashamed of himself? "Not in the least. I sort of feel guilty that I don't watch more TV because of the notion of popular culture."

So what does he watch? "I have a certain guilt that I spend so much of my time going to quite demanding performances that when I watch TV I love crap. I love retinal massage. Stuff that floats in front of my eyes. *The Bill*, for instance."

Complaints elsewhere, please, but you see the point. For Mr Henderson, TV meals amount to research and - as perhaps with Ms Burton - a kind of therapy. It's almost noble.

John Standing owns a catering business in Brighton, and he has good reasons to watch, too: "I have been living with someone in the past and in that scenario we used to sit down and exchange thoughts at the end of the day," he says. "But now I tend to walk in and rather than just be in the house with nothing I may have TV on - Sky News or something in the background. If I'm going to eat around the time the news comes on I will probably take my dinner in and watch. But it's more a time management thing as well."

Hurry on to Mrs Whitehouse. From her I was expecting an earful. Not a bit of it. "I think a lot depends on what is on," she said. "As far as we are concerned, my husband and I want to watch the news and if that comes on at the same time as our meal then we will watch it while we have our meal."

And there we are. Defence rests. Everyone has a good reason to eat in front of the television for at least part of every week. It is a habit ingrained by the good life, it is company, efficiency, cultural investigation, news concern and efficient time management.

But of course, the whole point about pervasive pleasures is that they find several

levels of justification. What would the prosecution say?

John Sessions traces his own resentment back to childhood memories of Vietnam war coverage. "My parents always had the TV on at mealtimes and I was aware that there was something wrong with sitting there eating a burger with these images of GIs hauling through the jungle going on in the corner," he recalls. "I thought it was crazy, eating at the same time."

But many of those who now watch and eat clearly don't care what's on. Indeed, some view news as a more worthy accompaniment to food than, say, *Absolutely Animals*. Have we grown less sensitive? Or do TV dinners simply underline - even protect - the blandness of what we watch? These are questions the prosecution might ask. And then there's the meal itself.

Dr Michele Sadler of the British Nutrition Foundation says of TV dining: "You are focusing less on the food. There's no evidence that that has any effect on nutrient intake, but in terms of satisfaction you get from eating, if you see less, might you want to go and seek that satisfaction later? Maybe that should be investigated." Maybe it should. But Dr. Sadler says she TV dines "occasionally".

Sessions says he wishes he could be as funny professionally as he is over dinner with friends. Maybe any of us should ask ourselves when we last cracked a joke over telly. And singles might ask themselves when else in the day they experience silence. "It's just putting the problem on hold," is Sessions's view.

Personally, I'm with the prosecution. Too many mingled pleasures, one is over enough. Evidence: a ubiquitous can of Coke; an ever-present Sony Walkman. TV dining at any level other than the most occasional is just another monument to greed.

Sentence? Make it community service. Eat with friends. Bring back candles and napkins and serviette rings and lacy table-cloths. Dress up the meal like some old partner who's run out of sexy ideas. Reach for the radio. Anything rather than the TV knob. You won't agree, of course. But then your sofa is probably stained with gravy.

## This week: how can I ask for a rise, after years on the same salary?



### DILEMMAS VIRGINIA IRONSIDE

For 10 years, Hattie's been getting the same salary in a small firm. Her boss is sympathetic to the problems of a working mother, but now a junior position's been filled by a woman on much more money. How can Hattie screw up courage to ask for a rise?

Ten years seems an awfully long time to live on a sum that has, in terms of the cost of living, been getting continually smaller and smaller.

Did Hattie keep her mouth shut because she thought she was of no economic value? It's funny the enormous number of women who are so lacking in self-esteem that they would almost pay to have a job. And certainly women in highly important roles, such as actually seeing that the office runs OK, can mistake their role for motherhood and feel, deep down, that it is not right to ask for extra payment. Wages for housework has always seemed a batty idea to me; but some women feel that wages for being mother bent to the firm is also rather odd, and though they know intellectually they should get paid, emotionally they feel surprised and grateful that they get anything at all. Add to this the family atmosphere of Hattie's small firm - that her boss is very considerate to any problems with her children, allows her time off and so on - and a woman can often be bamboozled into feeling that it is just as good to be paid in kindness as in cash.

However, finally the worm has turned. If Hattie had been getting a bare 2 per cent a year since she started she'd be 35 per cent better off now, so she can use that sum as a guideline. Perhaps she should estimate the saving she's made in child care and balance the figure up.

The next step is to confront her boss. This is where she must be very careful. People who

stomp into bosses' offices whining about how unfair things are, and claiming they're being exploited, may possibly get the rise they want, but their complaints leave a nasty taste in everyone's mouth. It takes two to do the *paseo doble*, anyway, and Hattie has to take a fair bit of blame for the situation since she's been a mouse for so long. How she phrases her request is crucial. I suggest she makes a date to see her boss and then goes in with rather a sheepish smile on her face. "I must be the most forgetful woman around," she should say with a winsome smile, "because in all the time I've been here I've never asked for an increase. It seems to me that since I haven't asked, the least I could expect would be to be paid the same as the new woman you've employed, or perhaps 5 or 10 per cent more to reflect my seniority."

This way, she takes responsibility for not getting a rise and avoids confrontation.

What will he say? If Hattie is of economic value her boss may well appreciate the way she approaches the situation, and cough up. If he's been regarding her as a tiresome old bat for years and has just been exploiting her, he'll tell her that he can't afford any more and Hattie will have an idea how much she means to the firm.

Asking requires two things, a clear idea of what she wants, and courage. I once made eight appointments to see an erratic female editor, seven of which were cancelled. At the eighth she gave me a thumbs-down. It was humiliating, but at least I'd asked. And I left as soon as possible afterwards.

### WHAT READERS SAY

#### Shock your employer and ask for more

You know the only solution for you is to approach your employer and to ask him for an appointment to discuss your situation. My situation is very similar to yours and when I finally popped that difficult question his first reaction was: "You are not leaving, are you?"

I have three young children and a husband who frequently travels abroad. I was very pleased to find a job locally where the atmosphere was very positive and understanding towards the combination of motherhood and work. I started this job three years ago and it became quickly apparent that I was able and willing to take on more and more interesting and responsible work. So my brief expanded but a raise in money was overruled.

Then a freelancer was hired to take over part of my more interesting work and was paid more per hour than I was per day! That did it for me. Like you, I was facing a very difficult decision because in the end, it is hard to combine motherhood with work.

This is what I did: I scanned all

the papers for job advertisements and made a note of similar jobs and the salary. I wrote to one and got as far as an interview. That gave me the confidence to approach my boss. I set myself a date by which I had to ask him for an appointment. I admit it was in the last two minutes before I dared to do it. What happened was amazing: the moment I opened my mouth on this subject he was the one who became nervous and embarrassed. We had at first an open discussion to assess what we wanted from one another and for me it has worked out brilliantly: the freelancer is gone, another person is hired to do the administrative part of my job and I am left with doing only the interesting work. I also work less hours and received a pay rise.

So Hattie, you are much more valuable than you think. I wish you luck!  
C Maynard Smith, London

#### It's your duty to demand a better deal

Yes, of course you're being taken advantage of; and I've been there as

a widowed parent in the 1950s. Unofficial flexitime is seen by your employer as his benign "quid pro quo" - but always in his favour. He thinks he's doing you a favour, feels good about it, and is therefore off the hook.

In the Seventies, as a daughter caring for elderly parents, I found a totally different attitude - which gave me freedom within limits of contact hours to attend the inevitable crises.

It's your bounden duty in the 1990s, and not only for your own sake, to tackle your boss. P.D.Q. about an official flexitime policy and a regular pay-review structure. However small the firm, both of these arrangements can be made openly and without any emotional blackmail.

Anne Crocker, Bath

#### Accept that it may be time to move on

As a former manager (and employee) I know that bosses, like everyone else, take those close to them for granted. Your grievance will probably be greeted

with genuine surprise.

Plan a date by which you will raise the issue of a pay rise. Prepare carefully, looking at advertisements for comparable jobs to gauge your market worth. You may want to apply for jobs, on a confidential basis, to get you in a positive frame of mind and give you a fall-back position. In the period before the discussion, do not sulk, simmer or "work to rule". Be especially cheerful, industrious and smart.

When the appropriate moment comes, keep it factual and unemotional, don't give ultimatums and make it clear that you don't wish to ambush the boss into an instant response. Cite your worth in terms of the market and don't make too many comparisons with colleagues, which will only make you feel mean and your boss defensive. Don't be fobbed off with how flexible the firm has been. This is what businesses have to do these days to hold on to valuable employees who happen to be parents. Come to terms in advance with the fact that if you get oowhere, this may be time to move on.  
Karen Ludlow, London SW18

### NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

I have a daughter of 14 who is becoming very greedy. As a single parent I find it hard enough to pay the bills, and have always kept her well dressed, with occasional trips out to theatres, events and so forth. But she's lately been out with new friends who have tons of cash and she's become very demanding, asking

for £100 for a shopping trip and saying I don't love her when I can't do it. I have told her to ask her father, who has paid nothing towards her upkeep.

I'm lucky to have two part-time jobs, but this means no sick or holiday pay. Lately I've been crying, and so miserable I've had to take days off sick, so

we are even worse off. I get family credit but I dread this ending when my daughter leaves school. What can I do?  
Andrea

Comments are welcome, and everyone who has a suggestion quoted will be sent

a bouquet from Interflora. Send personal experiences or comments to me at the Features Department, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL (fax 0171-293 2182) by Tuesday morning. And if you have a dilemma of your own that you would like to share, please let me know.

# 20/LEADER & LETTERS

## Pleas for Saudi clemency, yes, but no more than that



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Robin Cook got it exactly right when he said the objective is to avoid any death penalty and any lashes. Any British government, whatever its political complexion, however anxious it might be about trade or oil, could do no less than intercede to prevent brutal treatment of British citizens, guilty or innocent. But it need do no more than that, certainly not pander to the hysterical tone which has accompanied reporting of the accused British nurses in Saudi Arabia. We need to recognise this story is richly cross-cut by questions of cultural relativism, racism, Islamophobia; it has also thrown up unsavoury evidence of prurience.

There are such things as universal human rights – that belief is a cornerstone of our civilisation – and they probably include protection against cruel and unusual punishment. But there are also such things as tolerance of local circumstance and recognition of the diversity of morals. There are also the obligations which travel-

lers or residents in a foreign country take upon themselves. The intolerance of strict Islam for the consumption of alcohol, among other things, is well known. To go and live in Saudi Arabia as a matter of choice is also to accept, temporarily, the jurisdiction of Saudi police and Saudi judges.

The desert kingdom has been pretty much of a known quantity since at least Richard Burton's time, and anyone going there to live, including British nurses, has done so in the knowledge that Saudi ways are emphatically not our ways. Living abroad is to enter into an implicit contract with the host country: take its pay, observe its rules. When things go awry, the contract does not cease to be valid.

British justice is not impeccable nor – which may be more to the point in this case – is the conduct of investigating police officers. That said, the performance of Saudi institutions leaves some big questions pending, and they have nothing to

do with sharia law or the principles of Islam. The Saudi government, evidently anxious to palliate opinion in Britain, despite the harsh language of its ambassador in London, has fallen between two stools; neither treating the case as it would have done it, say, Filipino maids had been involved, nor ensuring that the suspects were treated in Western fashion. The involvement of the victim's brother has further muddled the water.

None of that is to challenge either the legal competence of the Saudis to try the case according to precedent, nor their capacity to find and punish Nurse Gifford's killers. Saudi Arabia may be a nepotistic oligarchy where the proceeds of oil extraction have fed an orgy of materialism (and a series of deeply ambiguous interventions in Middle Eastern politics) but that does not permit the inference that no justice is possible in the kingdom.

The Saudis, moreover, will justly note the sudden change of tack on the part of

British newspapers who not long ago were all too keen on the application of bamboo canes to bare backs – as long as the wielders were stout British turnkeys and the backs belonged to youthful malefactors. There is in short a whiff of racism in the air. The fact that elements in latter-day Islam are deeply misogynist is of no direct relevance, except that the accused nurses have alleged they were sexually abused by investigating police officers, a charge that would have been impossible to lodge if women in Saudi Arabia were given even elementary public recognition and civic protection.

Robin Cook needs to keep his oar and stick to proper intercession with what is after all one of Britain's closest diplomatic partners in the region. His task would, it must be said, be easier had he not recently been buckling on the breastplate of international relations righteousness and proclaiming an ethical foreign policy in absolutist terms. To

strive to conduct relations with foreign countries on the basis of a set of values is one thing; to announce in grandiloquent terms that henceforth Labour's foreign relations would be squeaky clean is another, and Mr Cook risks being held to account to impossible standards.

Perhaps this case will give him a chance to get a better grip on what he intends. The sale of arms to and diplomatic support for Saudi Arabia constitute a large British interest: that contention has not been challenged. As a general rule the internal affairs of the Arabian peninsula are not our concern, and we expect British nationals working there (for their personal benefit) to play by local rules. What that leaves as government's role in the case of Nurses McLaughlin and Parry is not great. To plead for clemency, to deplore treatment that British opinion regards as barbarous – these are the least and the sum of appropriate official intervention.

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and include a daytime telephone number.  
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E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.  
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

## LETTERS

### Millennium bomb

Sir: Nicholas Lumsden (Letters, 23 September) is suffering from a common reaction to the year 2000 problem: denial. His suggestion that users should simply wind forward their computer clocks to 2001 is impractical, misses the scale of the problem but, most important, simply will not work. The difficulty is not in recognising the year 2000 *per se* but with computers understanding that the years "00", "01", etc, come after "99".

Even if his idea were feasible, it makes the basic assumption that this is a problem which affects only personal computers, and has a single solution. Unfortunately, as IT directors across the world are discovering, this is not the case. HELENA STURRIDGE  
Editor, Computer Weekly

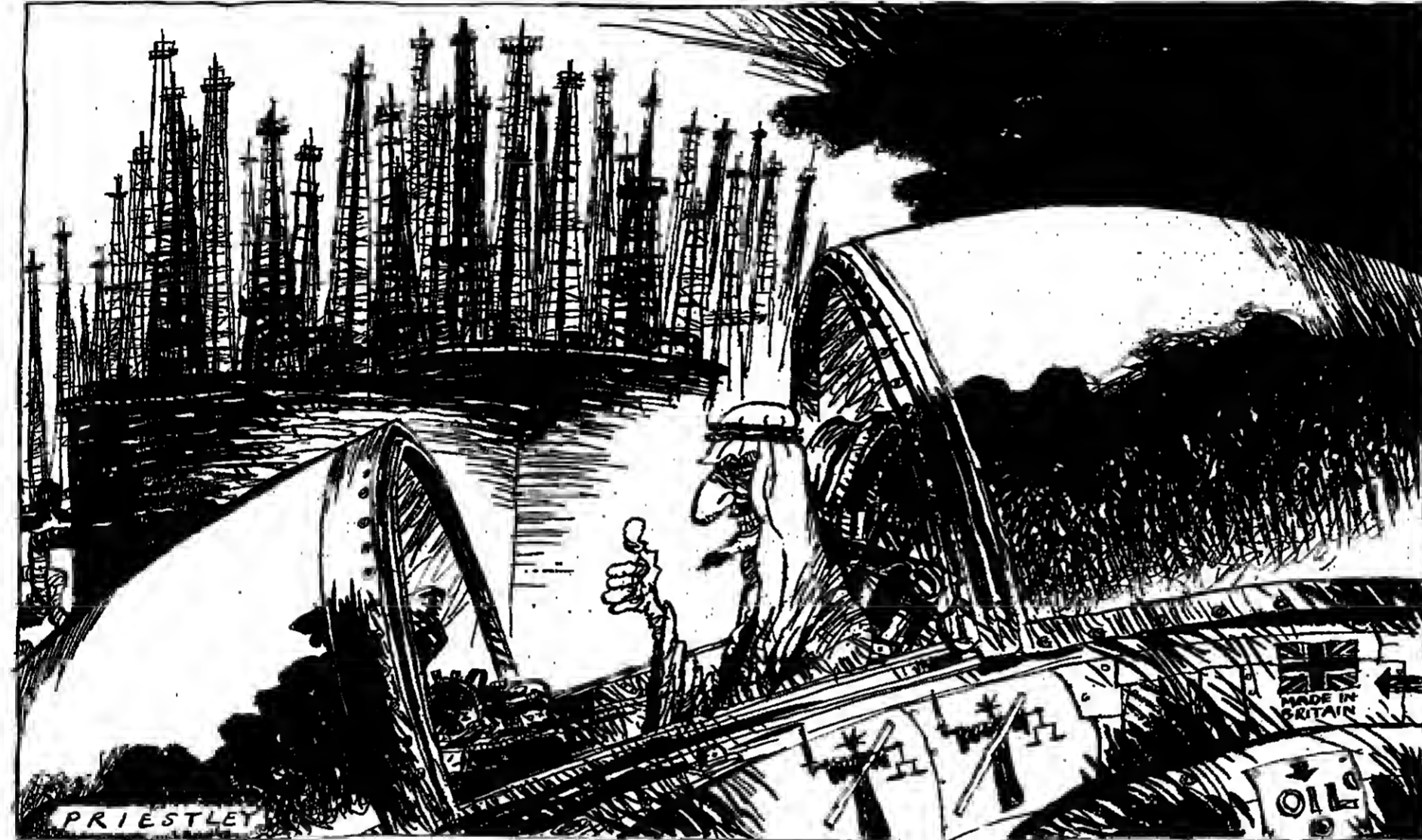
Sir: This week you have printed two letters displaying a degree of ignorance about the year 2000 computer problem.

First, whilst there is an option to all users to sue the supplier this will not correct the problem, nor will it provide enough compensation quickly enough to fund the changes that will be required. If a company wishes to be in business after 31 December 1999 it needs to check its computer systems now, not get involved in a court case that will finish in the next decade.

Secondly, the problem is mainly connected with old code in mainframe machines. Y2000 compliance is a real issue that will effect real people's lives and jobs. There are no clever answers or quick solutions. This is a serious business, and your readers need to take up to the fact. RAHAM EVANS  
Orkhampton

### Freud's reputation

Sir: Andreas Whittam Smith, in his account of Freud's seduction story, states that "Freud had come convinced by stories related to him by patients of the portance of sexual experiences undergone during childhood" (23 September). This is a account Freud gave many years later, but is false. As his final papers show, it was he who insisted that the patients had experienced sexual seduction in infancy; the leeches, Freud reported,



"assure me... emphatically of their unbelief".

Mr Whittam Smith alludes to the many references to Freud in recent publications as evidence of our debt to him, but Richard Webster is nearer the mark when he writes that Freud is treated as "a kind of dead letter box into which any profound insight into human nature whose origins are obscure... is automatically sorted".

As Mr Whittam Smith indicates, there have been several scholarly critiques of Freud in recent years. The fact that he describes these as "vicious" suggests that he has not read them, but is relying on second hand reports. ALLEN ESTERSON  
London W6

### Voting reform

Sir: In his perceptive piece (Comment, 23 September) Donald MacIntyre outlines two choices for the Electoral Commission which Labour and the

Liberal Democrats have pledged will draw up a "single proportional system" of election to put before voters in a referendum, as an alternative to the status quo.

The difficulty for Labour advocates of the Alternative Vote (such as Peter Mandelson and Peter Hain) is to show how this system can be reconciled with Labour's manifesto pledge to offer a proportional system. In our recent report, "Making Votes Count" (published this week by Scarman Trust Enterprises) we show that this system would be far less proportional than first-past-the-post elections – for instance, cutting Tory MPs at the 1997 election from 165 to just 110, half the number they would be entitled to under a proportional system.

We also showed that the Liberal Democrats' favourite system (the single transferable vote) would have worked in an unproportional way in 1997, so that Paddy Ashdown also confronts a problem in reconciling

his preference with the promises already made to voters.

By contrast the approach which Donald MacIntyre sees as a "possible cloudy basis for compromise" is a variant of a third system called the Additional Member System, which does operate in a reliably proportional way, so long as it is designed right. It involves electing some MPs locally, and some regionally through party top-up lists.

With a 50:50 split between the two types of MPs, or slightly more local MPs, as in the Scottish Parliament, this method works very proportionately.

But the more local MPs there are (and hence the fewer top-up MPs to correct distortions) the more disproportional this system would become.

These results, established by the most rigorous political science methods, are not just "voting systems nerdery" (as Donald MacIntyre terms it). They go to the heart of the

problems which both Labour and Liberal Democrats confront in the future. You cannot inaugurate a new age of better politics by betraying firm manifesto promises on the choice that citizens will get in the referendum on voting reform. PATRICK DUNLEAVY (LSE), HELEN MARGRETS (Birkbeck College), STUART WEIR (University of Essex)  
Department of Government  
LSE  
London WC2

### Snoring

Sir: Monique Roffey's article ("I'd love to go to bed with you, but don't expect to sleep", 23 September), starts with: "Snoring is one of the most and most-social human habits".

Let's face it, we all snore in varying degrees. It's the way nature made us, so why make a big thing about it?

Even our recently departed and much loved cat snored loudly enough to wake our

visitors. Accept it; it's part of life and no big deal.

So, Monique, if you love him and he loves you, do what you do together in the bedroom, and sleep, if required, in separate rooms: we do, as we find many of our friends do as well. STUART AND MARGARET HARRISON  
Lichfield, Staffs

### Malaya and Islam

Sir: Matthew Chance's criticisms of the Islamic revival in Malaysia show an inability to realise that non-European peoples might intelligently prefer their own values to those of Europe ("Islam's grip tightens", 22 September).

As Malaysia opens up to the world, its young people are inevitably becoming more aware of the faults as well as the virtues of the global civilisation which the West has created. For instance, while Muslims in most countries affirm the right of religious minorities to con-

sume alcohol, they cannot accept that alcohol is truly in a different category to other narcotics. Many look with puzzlement on the reactions to the death of the Princess of Wales, for which everything except the true culprit – alcohol – was blamed.

Muslims have similar difficulties understanding the Western urge publicly to display the human body, either in person or through images.

It is not the body or private sexuality that we object to, but rather the progressive sexualisation of public spaces, which inevitably provides more scope for marital infidelity and hence the trauma of divorce.

Public anatomical displays may enrich the fashion and cosmetics industries, but they are oppressively marginalising to the old, and to all who may be spiritually admirable, but physically fail to measure up to the current images of perfection. Modesty in dress is hence not oppressive, but liberating.

No doubt any onslaught by a Malaysian prime minister on a demigod of the financial world will call forth a dutiful flurry of anti-Malay sentiment. But Malaysia remains a success story, with no Ulster-style religious violence between its many religious groups.

As it grapples with a flawed modernity, it will continue to thrive because of, rather than despite, its confident Muslim identity. ABDAL HAKIM MURAD  
Cambridge

### Conservation

Sir: The Independent recently published an article ("World conservation groups accused of putting people last in rush to preserve endangered plant and animal species", 15 September), which reported an accusation by the group Survival International regarding the bioprospecting project which Conservation International helped establish among the Saramaka Maroon people of Suriname's rain forest.

As in all of CI's projects, the foundation of our work begins with the local people. In Suriname, CI helped establish the bioprospecting project as a means for the country to benefit economically from its biologically rich rain forest without cutting it down.

The Maroon people of Suriname are Conservation International's partners in an ongoing effort to prevent the wholesale destruction of Suriname's rain forests. LISA BOWEN  
Media Relations Director  
Conservation International

### Red Cross

Sir: Before the Red Cross spend their money on designing a new logo, why don't they rotate their current logo through 45 degrees to create a non-religious symbol?

They could call it The Red Cross. ANDY BROWN  
St Alban's, Herts

### Irish stereotypes

Sir: I wish to add my voice to the growing number of protests against the BBC's portrayal of the Irish in a stereotypical manner. I refer, of course, to the characters in *Ballykissangel*. RUTH MCCracken  
Millon Keynes, Bucks

## A woman one simply has to take one's hat off to – and then eat it



MILES KINGSTON

Today I am pleased to welcome a guest writer, Mrs Ethel Rommel of the Millinery Museum in Yorkshire. This museum is one of the very few in the world devoted entirely to headgear, and Mrs Rommel (no relation) has made a lifelong study of the influence of hats and caps on the English language. Today she answers all your queries.

Where does the expression "madcap" come from, as in "madcap exploits"?

Mrs Rommel writes: There has always been a close correlation between the brain and the thing which covers the brain, be it the hat or cap, so in popular parlance it is quite common to transfer characteristics of one to the other.

That is, when we think someone is a bit cracked, we say he is a "madcap". When we want someone to buck their ideas up, we tell him to "get his thinking cap" on. We don't really think that the cap can think. We are just lending the cap qualities associated with ...

Yes, yes – I get the idea. But we don't call female intellectuals anything like that, do we? We call them "blue stockings". Why do we call them "blue stockings" and not "blue hats" or something?

Mrs Rommel writes: Ah, now that is slightly outside my subject. That's a stocking question. If you really want to know, I can give you the address of Mrs Jane Mauleverer, my counterpart at the Sock and

Stocking Collection ...

Er, no, thank you very much. Tell me though, why do we say that someone has been knocked into a cocked hat?

Mrs Rommel writes: We don't.

Don't we?

Mrs Rommel writes: No. Not any more. Research shows that this expression has more or less died out.

Oh, well, what about "throwing your hat in the ring"?

Cake Heritage Centre ...

No, thank you very much. Tell me though, why do we say that someone has been knocked into a cocked hat?

Mrs Rommel writes: We don't.

Don't we?

Mrs Rommel writes: No. Not any more. Research shows that this expression has more or less died out.

Oh, well, what about "throwing your hat in the ring"?

Mrs Rommel writes: Yes, that's still current. As you know, it means to enter a competition. Especially one that involves throwing hats into a ring.

the hat is the most instantly removable item of clothing that we possess, and therefore the quickest to symbolise things.

That's why we say that a footballer has been "capped for England". That's why we "pass the hat round" when we are collecting. You wouldn't pass the coat round. Or say that someone has been trussed for England. Would you?

No, but you do talk about someone flying by the seat of his pants, don't you?

Mrs Rommel writes: How very true. If you want further information, why not write to the Trouser Information Centre, at Bipedal House, London W1?

Yes, I might. And there again, I might not. Why is it called a bowler?

Mrs Rommel writes: Why is what called a bowler?

A bowler hat.

Mrs Rommel writes: Ah. It is so named after John Bowler, a London hatter.

Why is it called a derby in America?

Mrs Rommel writes: Because the Americans are not democratic like us and prefer to name things after aristocrats.

In this case, Lord Derby?

Mrs Rommel writes: Very good. Did you know, by the way, that the French word for bowler is "Chapeau melon" or "Melon hat"?

The French simply thought it resembled a melon. You can always learn more by writing to the Fresh Fruit Foundation ...

Ah!! I didn't see that one coming! Very good! You pulled the wool over my eyes there! Incidentally, is that a hat expression?

Mrs Rommel writes: No. It is a sheep expression. Why not write to ...?

No, thanks. Well, I've enjoyed this very much, but I haven't learnt a thing. If you haven't been talking through your hat, I'll ...

Mrs Rommel writes: Eat your hat?

Exactly.

If you want to know more about headgear and language, write to anyone you like but not us.

John Kingston

## Ashdown ran away from telling the harsh truth



**DONALD  
MACINTYRE  
WITH THE  
LIB DEMS**

The Liberal Democrats love their leader. There is nothing synthetic about the rapture with which Paddy Ashdown's party received his speech yesterday. The hall was packed. The minute-by-minute applause spontaneous. The party basking in the leader's own flattery of it. Even as he magnanimously distributed compliments to those who ran the election campaign, the faithful sat secure in the unshakeable belief that he is overwhelmingly the party's greatest electoral asset. A few of his younger lieutenants have this week have jockeyed, with absurd optimism, for the benefit of the gallery. But it's in the empty hope of filling a vacancy which for now doesn't remotely exist.

Paddy is entitled to this adulation. But it also sets a yardstick by which to judge what he says to his party. Supremely popular among his own tribe as he is, Ashdown can afford to take liberties which might not be available to another leader. A William Hague, his position precarious almost before his leadership is completely under way, apparently dares not speak truths about the reasons for his party's defeat. Ashdown, riding on an electoral success, unchallenged for nine years at the head of an expanding party, can get away with a great deal more.

So this is one yardstick by which to assess the well rehearsed message that Ashdown was telling home truths to his party yesterday. The other is the disjunction exposed in Eastbourne this week between where Ashdown wants to take the Liberal Democrats and where they want to be. Don Foster, the education spokesman, does not make the ludicrous claim that the Blair betrayed the Labour government by not bringing primary school class sizes down to 30, four months after taking office, because he believes it. He does it because he thinks it is what the party wants to hear. Charles Kennedy is an intelligent enough politician to know the rank absurdity of suggesting that the Lib Dems should set about the task of replacing the Conservatives as the main opposition to Labour. It's a claim which defies history, wishing away the enduring right in British politics. It founders on the truth that for every 10 seats where the Liberal Democrats are second, seven are Tory and three are Labour. Kennedy doesn't think those seats are remotely winnable by making the Government the Liberal Democrats' principal opponents. Nor does he think for a second, as he appeared to imply this week, that coalition with Labour is not the utterly inevitable consequence of electoral reform. He just thinks they are arguments that will appeal to the large proportion of activists who are much more interested in winning seats from Labour on local councils than in increasing their power at Westminster. Assuming therefore that the Kennedys and Fosters are judging their party correctly, Ashdown, seeking to condition his party to-

wards what it needs to do if it to realise the holy grail of electoral reform has both a big problem and the power to do a lot about it.

It's hard to give him more than two cheers. He spoke, albeit a little opaquely, of the "risks" he was prepared to take to maximise the party's influence. He warned, rightly, that the party will have to compromise some of its most cherished constitutional goals if it is to make progress in the famous joint Cabinet committee. He was careful, despite some unrepentant and generalised New Labour-bashing, to affirm his belief that Blair is "serious about changing the culture of our politics." In a gentle but unmistakable rebuff to Kennedy, he derided the notion that the Liberal Democrats should be content to be a "conventional opposition". He warned against "an excessive concern for our purity." He eschewed the "politics of the tribe".

So far so good. It was, in the end, an appeal for the Liberal Democrats to grow up. But was it enough? Did the audience understand it in their hearts as well as their heads? Within two hours of Ashdown's speech the conference did two apparently trivial things which rather graphically suggest otherwise. First, in a move inspired by little more than the self-interest of the ubiquitous Liberal Democrat councillors, the conference reaffirmed its opposition to the idea of a directly elected London mayor. With one voice, scarcely noted in the warm afterglow of Ashdown's rhetoric, the party, described in that rhetoric as the true reformers, leading on a laggardly Labour Party, set itself against one of the most exciting constitutional innovations of the new government. And even if the party's policy were right, is it sensible? Are the Liberal Democrats really going to campaign for a No vote in the referendum on an elected mayor - and in the process look even more antedivine than the Conservative Party? Blair overcame similarly entrenched municipal opposition to make the mayor policy, Ashdown, in his speech yesterday, didn't even try. Immediately afterwards the party reaffirmed its commitment to the single transferable vote.

There is not the merest ghost of a chance that STV will become the agreed system of PR. At the moment the party will be lucky if it achieves the "alternative vote" before the next election - very lucky considering that on the 1997 vote shares it would have doubled their seats in Westminster.

It's easy to say that doesn't matter, that in the big grown-up village of Westminster everybody who knows anything knows that Ashdown appreciates that all these policies, from an impressively huge list of spending commitments to an absolutely unattainable form of PR don't mean anything. But Blair, whom Ashdown genuinely admires, rather more than he let on to his conference yesterday, has shown there is another way. That it's not just the leader who matters; the party has to change too. It's unwise for Labour politicians to patronise the Liberal Democrats, the best of whom would grace a Blair Cabinet, as the Prime Minister knows. But it just as unwise for the Liberal Democrats to patronise Labour. When Ashdown rightly congratulates his party for their successes, and then baraganes Labour for its tax and spending policies, he would do well to remind it that quite a lot of those successes were because Labour supporters switched to Liberal Democrat candidates to help to return a Labour government committed to precisely those policies. Ashdown's speech was a step in the right direction. But telling unpalatable truths, as Blair has shown, is part of the new politics. Ashdown will have to do more than he did yesterday.



Fukuyama looks back to a golden age before the arrival of the Pill when there was a 'co-operative social norm' Photograph: Hulton Getty

## Yes, the old order is dead - and it's women you should be thanking



**POLLY  
TOYNBEE  
ON FRANCIS  
FUKUYAMA**

We are living now in a frightening era called "The End of Order" - a society dislocated by the breakdown of the family, our social fabric trailing in the gutter. Crime and mayhem, anti-social children, plummeting education standards, we are slipping into the abyss. Who is to blame? Women.

Francis Fukuyama, the social guru who brought us *The End of History*, this week publishes his grand new theory, *The End of Order*. He warns that this is the result of what he calls The Great Disruption - a time of social upheaval as great as the Industrial Revolution. It started in 1965, 30 years of rising divorce, illegitimacy, crime, working women and social chaos. Who started it? Women.

First, I think he is right. We are living through a social revolution as profoundly earth-shaking as the advent of communism in Russia, or indeed the Industrial Revolution. Those were external forces, organised by savage governments or ruthless mill-owners and landowners, pushing reluctant people to live and work in new, hostile ways. They never changed hearts and minds, they just bullied and starved people into change.

But this Great Disruption came not from any grand plan or economic imperative, but by ordinary people individually marching with their feet, without orders from anyone. For the first time ever, in the 1960s, people were at last rich enough and free enough to throw off their social shackles. And Fukuyama is right, it was mainly women who made the change.

It is a revolution right in the heart of the family, behind the closed front doors where politics never penetrates. It is a revolution that has changed for ever the balance of power, money and freedom between women and men.

As we are still in the middle of it, we cannot see clearly where it will lead or how it will end. This is a transitional time. Those who detect it are quick to point to its worst effects, the social fall-out of any great change. Those of us who celebrate the new freedom protest that society has been too slow to accommodate itself to the change and find ways to pick up those who have fallen into the crevasse between the old order and the new. Women's earning power is still too low for most to become breadwinners for their families, so welfare bills have soared, too many women and children are poor, there is no childcare, men have refused to adapt - and so on.

Fukuyama is apocalyptic. He does not consider any social benefits in his catalogue of woe. All is disorder. He dates his End of Order from the arrival of the Pill, and increases in welfare. By the 1980s, half of new marriages could be expected to end in divorce. At the same time women were entering the labour market in droves, and their fertility fell. "Women best able to care for and raise children were having fewer, while those less able to do so were having more." Crime and

murder rates shot up. Children reared without fathers were the problem: "Just as male promiscuity needs to be controlled by the institution of marriage, male aggressiveness needs to be controlled by paternal authority." Women at work or on welfare could fend for themselves, so men were absolved of all fathering responsibility.

His Industrial Revolution analogy is useful. He writes: "The Industrial Revolution had, by the early 19th century, produced a host of social pathologies including high levels of murder and robbery, family breakdown, abandonment of children, alcoholism and the like. Deviance rates rose steadily through the middle of the 19th century, and thereafter began a long, slow decline." Yes, revolutions cause painful dislocation. But what does that make him? A social Luddite who wants to return to the old world.

What is the old order he craves? Strict social control: "As late as the 1950s in the United States, over 60 per cent of all brides were pregnant at the altar and their bridegrooms coerced into marriage (usually through the efforts of the girl's male relatives)." Oh happy days! Shamed women were shackled for life to men who didn't want to marry them and this is what he calls the "co-operative social norm". Everything that now fails to conform to that norm he labels "deviant".

Japan is his shining example of a highly developed society that has managed to avoid the Western "deviant" fate. How did they do it? Most important, he says, is that Japanese women do not work, or not after marriage. Japanese labour law permits wage discrimination against women, and divorce law favours fathers. Without welfare, the economic

prospects for a single mother in Japan are grim. He notes that the Pill was only legalised in Japan in 1996 and abortion carries a strong social stigma. "The reason why Asian societies, beginning with Japan, have been able to avoid the kinds of social problems facing North America and Europe is because they have more strongly resisted female equality."

I am sure he is right. Women's striving for equality is what has caused this revolution. He writes of women in society as if they were "other" - perhaps even the enemy. Keep them out of the labour market, give them no welfare or contraceptive and they will go back to the kitchen and cook and mother like the good geishas nature meant them to be. (There is much socio-biological determinism in this too.) He writes as if society were constructed for the convenience of men, which of course it was. But it is a while since I have read such an unself-consciously male view of the world. It is rather refreshing to read an analysis of social order so blatantly self-interested.

What is deviance, and what was his social order? It was a time when everything difficult and unhappy was kept safely behind the front door. As long as none of it spilled messily out into the streets, politicians and social theorists didn't need to worry. Private unhappiness is not a political or economic is-

sue. When feminists first said the personal was political, they meant that what happened in real life where it is lived by most people most of the time, in their homes, in their families, is indeed the proper concern of politics. Forcing people through poverty and public shame to stay in miserable and often violent marriages was politically and economically convenient. But what is politics for, if not to try to bring the greatest happiness to the greatest number? And that includes women, wanting to escape dependence and exclusion from mainstream life.

What's more, The Great Disruption has given men the chance to be happier and freer too. Some, like Fukuyama, may resent losing their hegemony; many others wouldn't return to the shotgun wedding era. Men have been slow to adapt, and that's why the revolution is only half-made. But things can only get better. As for the fall-out, Fukuyama is one of a torrent of commentators to plunge down into the entrails of the underclass to seek in that exceptional milieu a mirror for the whole of society. For most of us, the last 30 years have been a transformation, a new revelation of human potential and fulfillment. I would guess even poor women are better off too, if he bothered to ask them. *The End of Order* by Francis Fukuyama is published by the Social Market Foundation.

## Prince Andrew's real handicap - and it's got nothing to do with golf



**JOHN  
WALSH**

Sporting life-wise, the only place to be this weekend is Valderrama, the fashionable golf course near Gibraltar where the swarthy Europeans led by Seve Ballesteros are preparing to trash the whey-faced Yanks in the Ryder Cup. The Valderrama course, created for maximum impossibility by the Bolivian tin billionaire Jaime Ortiz-Patino, has become a terrific draw for powerful, well-heeled international nighlick fans. Should you and I, for instance, find ourselves momentarily distracted from the driving technique of Mr Tiger Woods and glance up at the VIP box, we shall be able to spot Prince Andrew (handicap 7, two better than James Bond) sitting beside ex-Prez George Bush (handicap 20 and rising) and the King of Spain (kings don't have handicaps).

It's quite a line-up (and that's before you've started on the golfers). Looking for further enlightenment about the Duke's prowess on fairway and green, one turns to *Golf International*, a glamorous new arrival in the suddenly-crowded field of sporting magazines. And there one learns an intriguing morsel about one of the Duke's obsessions.

It's a book. According to Peter Alliss, the veteran broadcaster, who hung out with the Queen's second son while filming *A Golfer's Travels in Royal Domoch*, Andrew has a thing about a certain novel and he reads it all the time. About four times a year, every year, in fact. This smacks of morbid self-identification. What can this absorbing volume be?

It's by an American woman called Margaret Craven and it's called *I Heard The Owl Call My Name* (Picador, £5.99, all good bookshops) and it tells the story of a young Anglican vicar called Mark Brian, who is sent by his bishop into the wilds of British Columbia, to hang out with the Indian tribesmen ("There was pride in his eyes without arrogance. Behind the pride was a sadness so deep it seemed to stretch back into ancient mysteries Mark could not even imagine.") In a village named, with awful portentousness, Kingcome. The young vicar is dying, and the bishop knows he is dying, and has sent him to live among the eagles and totems to learn the secrets of the tribe ("Each February we come here to claim") and to discover that The Way is Long and The Road is Hard

and other bromides so dear to the frontiersman's heart ("There is no word for 'Thank you' in Kwakwaka...").

The title refers to the recognition of death in Indian culture, as the hapless vicar discovers one night when, having achieved wisdom, he hears an owl getting its hooting equipment round the words "Mark Brian", presumably in the style of Bruce Forsythe inviting a contestant to come on down. It's an earnest and desperately solemn piece of work, inhabiting that territory of elemental baloney somewhere between *The Horse Whisperer* and *The Bridges of Madison County*, and shows, I fear, that the Duke of York is gradually turning into his big brother. Healthy red-blooded pursuits, like the action at Valderrama, are battling with morbid introspection for his soul and I hope the former wins. (*I Heard the Birdie Four Call My Name?* *I Heard the Eagle at the Staircase Call My Name?*)

Revolting news story of the week was that of the poor woman in Melbourne, Australia, whose face was torn off after she caught her hair in a

milking machine. Yeesh. The plastic surgeons (obviously the only medically-inclined Australians who haven't decamped to England to become dentists) amazingly managed to glue it all back on again, after packing it in ice, like caviar, and she may turn out to be just recognisable, now they've sewn up a few thousand tiny blood vessels and nerves and capillaries.

The phenomenon of having the outer skin on the front of your head flayed is known by the quaint modern locution, "de-gloved". I suppose it's just too gross to say you've been "defaced", as if you were a library book. And once you start, there's no end to the number of metaphorical uses to which we've put the outer covering of ourselves, the skin-as-persona. If what happened to the Melbourne woman were, unimaginably, done deliberately by herself, would you call her self-effacing? Suddenly you realise how much must be at stake for Oriental diplomats to worry about "losing face" and "saving face". The Beatles' "Eleanor Rigby", "wearing a face that she keeps in a jar by the door" (packed in ice?) was clearly 30 years ahead of her time. The real meaning of

"face-off" is the moment of battle between two hockey players with a puck between them on the centre line, but the expression has a popular figurative side, as in a head-to-head hate. Becoming "off your face" and having people "in your face" (like, say, surgeons) are recent bad habits. And, of course, given the details of the milking machine accident, the word "face-lift" will never sound quite so homely again.

It's in the area of face transplants, of course, that the world beyond Melbourne is so intrigued. Will we end up in the plastic surgeon's waiting-room, consulting pages of mini-photographs, as with a Dulux swatch, mix 'n' matching an earlobe here, a corner of eye there, an endearing dimple and a masterful curl of the upper lip? Or will we be offered a full-on transformation into one of a range of public faces? Shall we say, "I'm going on holiday to a country where they only watch Channel 4. Gimme a Matt Le Blanc ..." or "I've been invited to dinner with nine research chemists and I won't know what they're talking about. Give me a Jennifer Ehle, with extra I'm-having-a-delicious-time smile ..."

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## Salomons agrees to \$9bn buyout by Travelers

The consolidation of Wall Street took another giant step when Travelers Group, owner of Smith Barney, paid \$9bn (£5.6bn) for the parent company of Salomon Brothers.

David Osborne in New York and Tom Stevenson in London assess the creation of the latest mega-corporation.

The latest in a series of giant mergers was unveiled on Wall Street yesterday as Salomon Incorporated, the parent of investment bank Salomon Brothers, said it had agreed to an all-share buyout by the financial services giant, Travelers Group.

The after-shocks for Wall Street are expected to be monumental, establishing Travelers, and its retail stockbroker Smith Barney, as a new Goliath on the securities landscape. It elevates the enlarged firm to the mega-institution status of rivals such as Merrill Lynch and the recently merged Morgan Stanley Dean Witter.

The new company will be called Salomon Smith Barney Holdings. Its creation is certain to trigger extensive lay-offs at both companies to eliminate overlapping, especially among fixed-income traders and analysts. News of the merger came as a complete surprise in London where only a handful of senior Salomons employees were aware of the takeover.

The agreement also sees the departure of Robert Denham, chairman and chief executive of Salomon, and chief executive of Salomon, and confirms the rise and rise of Deryck Maughan, the 49-year old British chief executive of Salomon Brothers, who will serve as co-chief executive of the new firm alongside James Dimon, 41, chief executive of Smith Barney.

Mr Maughan's promotion is the culmination of a meteoric rise for the son of a Durham miner, who spent 10 years in the Treasury before moving into investment banking. He was promoted by Salomon's biggest shareholder, investment guru Warren Buffett, after the firm was found to have rigged US treasury bond auctions in 1991, the low point of a turbulent 10 years for the bank.

Mr Maughan took over as chairman and chief executive following the departure of three of Salomon's most high-profile directors, legendary chairman John Gutfreund, Salomon's president Thomas Strauss and trader John Meriwether.

Mr Maughan was seen then as the epitome of the new squeaky clean image Mr Buffett wanted to foster following a famous description of the bank as "rotten to the core". He was dubbed "Mr Integrity" by the Salomon staff who dominated the American bond market in the late 1980s and served as role models for the "Masters of the Universe" in Tom Wolfe's novel, *Bonfire of the Vanities*.

Mr Maughan worked in the British Treasury between 1969 and 1979 before being seconded to investment bank Goldman Sachs in London, where he stayed for four years before being lured over to Salomon in 1983.

In 1986, he went to Japan for five years building up the group's highly profitable Tokyo operation and had just returned to New York when the treasury scandal blew up.

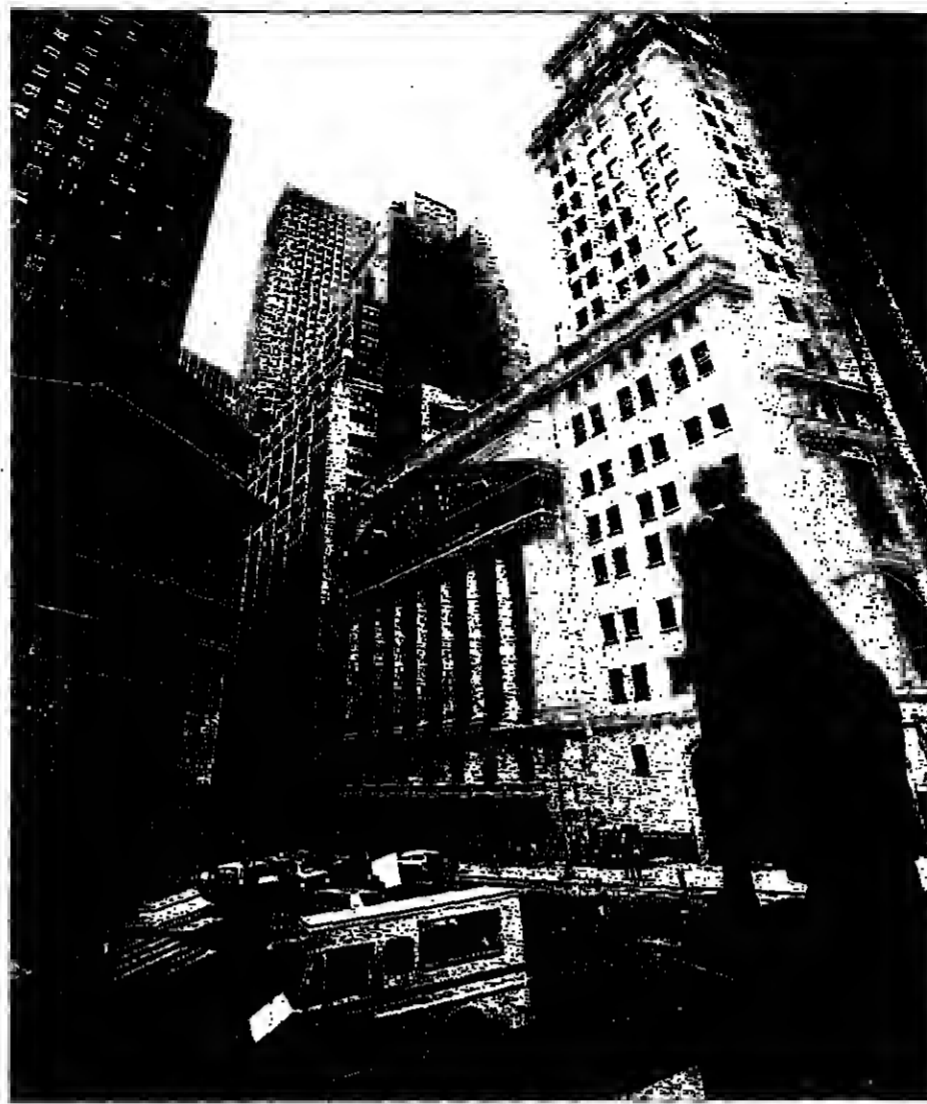
Peter Middleton, the former monk who unexpectedly quit Lloyd's of London to head up the bank's European operation, has been named head of the combined business in Europe. Salomon employs 1,500 in Europe, compared with Smith Barney's 250.

Travelers, with its red umbrella logo, has long been publicly parading its desire to find new partners and extend its operations. Headed by the highly regarded Sanford Weill, Travelers offers financial services ranging from life, property and casualty insurance to annuities and mutual funds.

"The complementary strengths of these two organisations... will create a financially powerful and formidable competitor in virtually every facet of the securities business, in any region of the world," Mr Weill said in a statement. Travelers is offering 1.13 shares of stock for every Salomon share.

Until only a few days ago, rumours had it that Mr Weill had his sights on Bankers Trust. It was suggested that Salomon was a second or third choice for Mr Weill. Goldman Sachs may have been his most favoured option but is understood to have resisted Travelers' advances.

Initial reaction to the Salomon deal was overwhelmingly enthusiastic. "We think this combination will create nothing short of a powerhouse," said Erik Gustafson of the Stein Roe Stock Fund, which has holdings in both companies.



Tremors on Wall Street: The mega-corporate deal between two US 'hulge bracket' investment banks confirms the trend towards giant mergers. Photograph: Brian Harris

Even on Tuesday, shares of Salomon soared to a historic high of \$71.50 as first rumours of the buyout began to leak and speculators saw their chance for a killing. By mid-morning yesterday, they were trading at \$78 a share.

Attention is now likely to focus once more on the two securities houses that still remain independent on Wall Street but which have long been seen as inevitable targets for acquisition: Paine Webber and Lehman Brothers.

"The merger and acquisition mania is just going to continue,"

Robert Froelich of Kemper Funds suggested. "I don't think there's any company in financial services which is too big to be taken over."

There are serial attractions to Salomon's strong equity and retail operations with the famous fixed-income franchise of Salomon Brothers. In addition to its bond business, Salomon is also a force in commodities and global markets trading.

The deal also answers Mr Weill's desire to give Smith Barney an international presence that had been lacking. "I think that Mr Weill wanted that international footprint in Salomon Brothers," Mr Gustafson suggested. Salomon has a big network of offices world-wide, notably in London.

Questions will be asked, however, about Salomon's heavy dependence on the proprietary division, where traders make huge leveraged bets in the international bond markets with the firm's own capital.

This is a notoriously volatile business that Mr Weill may very well like to see phased out.

Outlook, page 25

## National Grid to float Energis for £1bn

National Grid has given the green light to a £1bn December flotation of Energis.

Chris Godsmark, Business Correspondent, explains why Energis is working hard to dispel fears that the shares will go the way of other telecommunication industry flotations.

The confirmation of the flotation plans follows two years of uncertainty about the future of Energis, which runs telephone wires along the long-distance electricity transmission network.

National Grid had toyed with a private trade sale to a foreign telephone company, though Mike Grabner, Energis chief executive, said there had been "no significant discussions" with other operators for several months.

David Jones, National Grid's chief executive, would give few details of the share sale yesterday, including the value of the float or the size of stake likely to be offered to outside investors.

But analysts have speculated that the Grid would sell a quarter of the company, the minimum necessary to gain a full Stock Exchange listing. Dresden Kleinwort Benson has been signed up as Energis's financial advisers, with a prospectus due in November.

"For the foreseeable future we'd want to maintain the stake we finish up with after the sale. There's no strategy of selling down our stake in Energis," Mr Jones said.

The £250m raised for the Grid would pay off loans made to Energis, which last month stood at £230m.

National Grid's management was at one stage criticised for its heavy investment programme in Energis, with £338m so far injected into the venture. The company has accumulated losses of £237m, while capital spending is still running at £100m a year.

Under Mr Grabner, who was poached from British Telecom last year, Energis's customer base has expanded rapidly though better marketing. Last year the company had revenues of £97.1m and is likely to push this to around £160m this year.

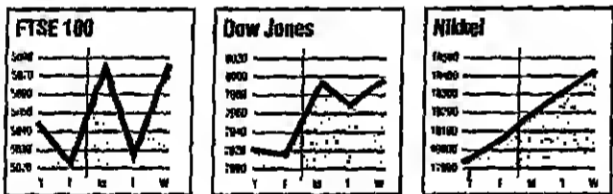
It made losses of £54.2m before interest in 1996-97, but is on course to make a small profit, excluding its hefty bill for interest and depreciation. Energis was the world's first network built around electricity cables to use an advanced form of optical fibre technology which offers almost limitless capacity by compressing signals into digital information.

The company, which targets only business customers, also claims to have better reliability and fewer reported faults than the older long-distance networks of BT and the former Mercury operation, now part of Cable & Wireless Communications (CWC).

Mr Grabner has aggressively targeted the more lucrative large business market, specialising in internal phone and data networks for customers such as the BBC and Boots, the retail giant.

He insisted this approach, coupled with the fact that Energis's network was already completed, meant it should be valued differently from some other telecommunications companies. Recent flotations of Orange, CWC and Ionica fixed wireless business have brought few gains for investors.

### STOCK MARKETS



Down Jones index and graph to 1997

Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5077.20	49.70	0.99	5086.80	3900.40	3.45
FTSE 250	4722.90	13.00	0.28	4729.40	3448.10	3.44
FTSE 350	2440.70	20.60	0.85	2438.90	1949.20	3.44
FTSE All Share	2383.98	19.13	0.81	2381.51	1925.79	3.43
FTSE SmallCap	2364.8	4.90	0.21	2374.50	1728.40	3.18
FTSE Technology	1276.4	2.00	0.16	1346.50	1159.70	3.19
FTSE AIM	1076.4	-0.90	-0.08	1138.00	1002.10	0.94
Dow Jones	8011.61	41.75	0.52	8259.31	5968.85	1.85
Nikkei	18420.08	218.78	1.20	21612.30	17303.85	0.95
Hong Kong	14205.44	111.06	0.79	16873.27	11546.70	2.94
Dax	4102.39	4.19	0.10	4438.93	2638.45	1.94

### INTEREST RATES

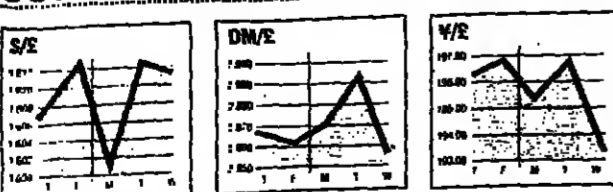


Money Market Rates	3 months	1 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr	15 yr	20 yr	30 yr
UK	7.30	1.39	7.52	1.27	6.61	-1.20	6.53	-1.59
US	5.72	0.06	5.97	-0.16	6.05	-0.71	6.23	-0.68
Japan	0.58	0.07	0.64	-0.07	2.15	-0.75	2.82	-0.83
Germany	3.31	0.21	3.73	0.43	5.51	-0.85	6.17	-0.79

### MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chgs	Falls	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chgs
BICC PLC	162.50	15.00	10.17	Greenalls Group	414.00	-37.50	-9.3
NEC PLC	161.50	10.50	7.45	Bioconglomerates	457.50	-17.50	-3.8
AG Sports PLC	481.50	21.50	4.47	Christs Int'l	260.00	-7.50	-2.8
T & N PLC	175.50	7.00	4.15	Vaux Group PLC	263.50	-7.00	-2.6

### CURRENCIES



Pound	at 100	Change	% Chg	Dollar	at 100	Change	% Chg
Dollar	1.6117	-0.0032	-1.997	Sterling	0.6205	-0.010	-1.6390
D-Mark	2.8573	-0.029	-1.014	D-Mark	1.7727	-0.114	-6.4264
Yen	193.88	-4.00	-2.06	Yen	120.30	-0.02	-0.016
S index	100.00	-1.10	-1.10	S index	105.10	-0.90	-0.85

### OTHER INDICATORS

at 100	Change	% Chg	at 100	Change	% Chg	
US Dow	18.78	0.06	22.31	112.30	3.50	1.59
Streng. Ind. (\$)	323.65	1.40	382.85	158.50	3.5	193.14
Gold (\$)	4.72	0.04	4.91	Base Rates	7.00	5.75
Silver (\$)						

source: Bloomberg

www.bloomberg.com

source: Bloomberg

## Greenalls on brink of shareholders' revolt

Greenalls, one of the largest pub groups in the UK, yesterday shocked the stock market with a profits warning.

Andrew Yates finds that the group could face a shareholder revolt if it fails to reverse the recent sharp decline in its share price.

Institutional shareholders in Greenalls yesterday expressed concerns about the future direction of the group after it said that trading at its managed pub estate had been flat over the summer months.

Greenalls shares tumbled 37.5p to 414p as analysts rushed to downgrade pre-tax profit forecasts for the year to September by £10m to around £154m.

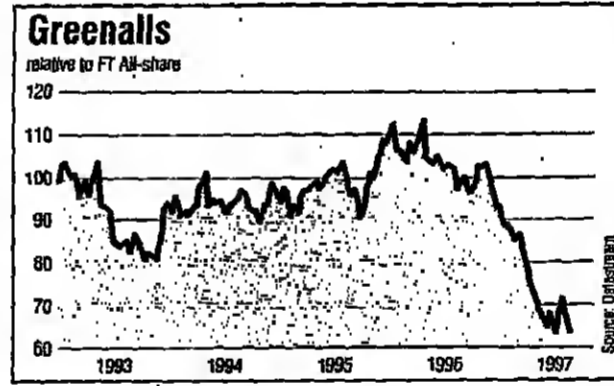
Greenalls shares have had a dreadful run, falling from a high of 633p last year and underperforming the stock market by almost 40 per cent over the past 12 months.

One leading drinks analyst said: "There could be real pressure on Greenalls' management from shareholders if they do not improve the group's performance soon."

"They seem to have taken their eye off the ball when they purchased Boddington and that is very worrying."

Another analyst said: "They should be achieving high single-figure growth at least in their managed pub chain like other in the industry. This trading statement came as a big shock."

Lord Daresbury, Greenalls' chief executive, said: "We are disappointed with the pub results. Our managed pub trade has been sluggish since the start of the summer. Some of our duty-free community pubs



have underperformed and that is where we are focusing our efforts now."

Greenalls joined the FTSE 100 index after its acquisition of Boddington, the pub and hotel group, in November 1995. However the group, which has more than 2,200 pubs in its estate, was ejected from the FTSE just three months later and its share price has plummeted ever since.

Greenalls said it had suffered from not spending enough money improving its pub chain while it integrated the acquisition of Boddington. It lost trade to competitors who were busy pumping millions of pounds into their own estates.

Greenalls plans to accelerate its capital expenditure programme and has earmarked more than £100m for its pubs

## Brussels 'won't change its mind on duty-free sales'

The European Commission yesterday launched an outspoken attack on efforts by the duty-free industry to reverse the looming ban on tax-free sales in 1999.

As Chris Godsmark reports, the issue could provoke a damaging rift between the EC and some European governments.

Despite months of intense industry lobbying, Mario Monti, the European Commissioner responsible for taxation, made clear that the EC was not sympathetic to the campaign to confine with duty-free sales. The industry has claimed the abolition would mean the loss of many of the 140,000 jobs in the duty-free trade, worth more than £4bn across the EU.

In a statement released during an industry conference in Brussels, Mr Monti said the decision to abolish duty-free sales, taken in 1993 by EU finance ministers, was not going to be changed even if lobbying budgets "increased to infinity".

"The time has come for airlines, airports and ferry operators, as well as suppliers of tobacco and alcohol products to face up to reality and invest their money wisely to get ready for 1999," said Mr Monti.

"Seldom in the history of the EU has so much money and time been spent by such a wide coalition of interests on trying to reverse the decision."

The statement, the first by Mr Monti on the issue for several months, was attacked last night by BAA, the privatised group which owns Heathrow and Gatwick airports. Sir John Egan, BAA's chief executive, has repeatedly predicted that the Council of Ministers would

overturn the ban, which would take effect from 1 July 1999.

Des Wilson, director of corporate and public affairs, accused Mr Monti of acting dictatorially. "The ultimate decision lies with the Council of Ministers, not the Commission. In saying this he's denying the Council's say on the matter. We'll continue to press our case."

Mr Wilson said Mr Monti was putting bureaucratic theory before the interests of consumers, who wanted duty-free sales to continue.

The Irish government backed the campaign yesterday, a move which will put pressure on the UK government to clarify its position. Labour has yet to make a public statement on its policy on duty-free sales. Countries such as Britain, Ireland and the Nordic countries stand to lose most out of the abolition.

## Chai Patel abandons Care First challenge

Chai Patel yesterday abandoned his attempt to be reinstated as chief executive of Care First, the embattled nursing home group. He said only around 15 per cent of shareholders were prepared to approach SBC Warburg, Care First's advisers, to call an egm to vote on reinstating Mr Patel and ousting Keith Bradshaw, the group's chairman.

Mr Patel quit the company last month after a power struggle with Mr Bradshaw. Mr Patel, who is now preparing to resign his non-executive directorship said: "We can take no more action. Everyone is disappointed, but the institutions felt that the price of going public on this was too high."

Andrew Crossley at Invesco, one of the shareholders leading the call to remove Mr Bradshaw, said: "In an ideal world, Keith Bradshaw would not be chairman. But in the end there was not sufficient appetite for a

this year, developing its branded chains such as Henry's Cafe Bar and Millers Kitchen.

Analysts point out, however, that the group has spent £80m on its estate in the past 12 months and has got little to show for it.

"If this spending spree does not produce a decent return the group could face a shareholder revolt," said one analyst.

Greenalls also said trading in the North-west, where it has 50 per cent of its estate, continued to be very difficult. It has decided to transfer another 79 managed pubs to its franchised and tenanted estate in an attempt to reverse the poor performance at these sites.

Greenalls' chairman, Andrew Thomas, has also presided over a rapidly declining share price at Limekiln, the troubled hothouses and kitchens group that has been a disastrous performer since it floated last year.

## BA axes losing route

British Airways yesterday raised the stakes in the battle to obtain regulatory approval for its American Airlines alliance by suspending its Glasgow-New York route and warning other long-haul routes were at risk if the tie-up was not sanctioned.

Boi Ayling, chief executive, said the route had lost £7m in the last three years and could only be made profitable by the extra feeder traffic the alliance with American would create.

The Glasgow-New York-Boston route is one of three transatlantic services operated by British Airways Regional. The airline said other long-haul regional routes might have to be scrapped if the alliance was blocked because there was insufficient local demand to keep them profitable.

Mr Ayling said: "We have maintained the route while we awaited approval for the alliance but we have now been waiting for over a year and we cannot continue to incur these huge losses."

BA announced the alliance in June 1996 but has since run into lengthy delays winning approval from regulators in Washington, London and Brussels. The most serious opposition is coming from the EU Competition Commissioner, Karel Van Miert, who earlier this week reiterated that the alliance would not be approved unless the two airlines gave up 350 slots a week at Heathrow - double the level of capacity the Office of Fair Trading wants to see cut to approve the deal.

The outcome of the US Department of Transportation's investigation of the alliance will not be known until December at the earliest.

The announcement of the Glasgow-New York suspension was coupled with a plea from Mr Ayling for regional backin for the alliance to secure its long-haul services BA currently operates.

- Michael Harrison

Care First is expected to release a statement today about events of the last week.

- Sameena Ahmad

## Budget puts France firmly on track for EMU

The French government yesterday announced a relatively painless budget for 1998, which respects the Maastricht guidelines and glosses over Socialist campaign promises. A sharp uptake in the French economy – and especially consumer spending – has come to Lionel Jospin's rescue. There is even talk in France of 'bringing forward' the European single currency, John Lichfield reports from Paris.

Three months ago it would have seemed impossible – ask President Jacques Chirac. He called – and lost – an early election partly because it seemed that the drawing-up of a 1998 budget, respecting the EMU guidelines, would be a political and fiscal nightmare.

The Socialist-led government yesterday presented the lame-duck President with a

relatively painless £160bn draft budget for next year, increasing some taxes, cutting some spending, notably on defence, but respecting the Maastricht targets without enormous suffering.

There are two explanations for this seeming act of prestidigitation by the Finance Minister, Dominique Strauss-Kahn. The first is the rapid uptake in the French economy, which is officially projected to grow by 2.2 per cent this year and 3 per cent next year. Mr Strauss-Kahn even forecast yesterday that France would be the best economic performer in Europe and North America in 1998.

The surge in the French economy has been driven by record exports and the falling franc but also, at long last, by a recovery of domestic demand. Figures released yesterday showed that consumer spending rose by 6.7 per cent in July (only to fall by 3.4 per cent with the holiday exodus in August).

There is a second explanation for the relative ease with which the Jospin government expects to meet the EMU target of a deficit of 3 per cent of GNP (the of-

ficial projection is now a 3.1 per cent deficit this year and 3.05 per cent next year). Mr Jospin and Mr Strauss-Kahn have, in effect, buried or delayed all but one of the economic promises and projects on which they fought and won the general election campaign in May.

Yesterday's budget was a Socialist budget to an extent. It increased the tax burden on business and relatively well-off families and reduced the burden on the less well-off. It found money for job-creation projects for the young (the one promise clearly kept) and gave more money to education. But it imposed a freeze on most other spending and slashed defence allocations by 8.7 per cent.

Mr Jospin had pledged there would be no further tightening of the belt to meet the requirements of Maastricht; three months later EMU clearly rules in Paris.

The centre-left coalition government is now so much on board the Maastricht bandwagon – to the fury of some of its left-in constituent parts – that there is even talk in Paris of bringing forward the de facto starting date for the single currency.

French officials have grown alarmed by the six-month gap in the Maastricht timetable between the final choice of participating countries and exchange rates (in the middle of next year) and the locking of currencies in January 1999. France fears this six-month hiatus will provide an irresistible roulette wheel for currency traders.

The treaty dates cannot easily be changed but French officials believe that some means might be found of, in effect, locking the exchange rates of EMU currencies together before the formal starting date.

None of this would be thinkable without the recovery of the French economy which eluded the previous centre-right government of Alain Juppé for so long. The recovery is little of Mr Jospin's doing, except that the change of political direction does seem mysteriously to have boosted the "animal spirits" of the French economy and persuaded households, and businesses, to start spending for the first time in years.

Mr Jospin's right-wing critics immediately suggested yesterday that this would be a budget to kill those animal spirits stone

dead, increasing taxation on the middle classes and some sections of industry. The government disputes this.

It points out that the 1998 budget will not increase the state's consumption of French domestic product: the public sector will amount to 45.9 per cent next year, slightly less than the record of 46 per cent achieved in 1997 under a barely amended Juppé budget.

Taxes are increasing but they are also being adjusted to spare business which invests productively and to give as fair a deal to the less-well paid, who do badly under the French tax system. Some middle-class perks – including a tax break for domestic help – are being scaled back.

Family allowances are to be means-tested for the first time, a significant departure in welfare policy which may be extended to other areas. More of the cost of health policy is being shifted on to a "general social tax" which will hit savings as well as earnings.

Mr Strauss-Kahn, the Economy Minister, described it as a "frugal budget" which would correct several "fiscal injustices".



Dominique Strauss-Kahn: Respecting targets without enormous suffering

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Value of call time per month	worth up to £20.00	worth up to £20.00	worth up to £20.00	worth up to £20.00
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## Barratt chief warns rate rises may damage housing market

Sir Lawrie Barratt, the retiring chairman of Barratt Developments, warned that further interest rises could put the housing market recovery in jeopardy. Current rates of 8.5 per cent were not an issue but he said: "Each 1 per cent would damage confidence and if they got back to 10 per cent it would result in very severe damage to confidence." He also renewed his call for the Government to resist further attacks on mortgage interest relief. "If they are not careful, they will go down a suicide route of putting off first-time buyers." He called for a new partnership between the industry and government of the type that existed under Margaret Thatcher's administration. His comments came as Barratt unveiled a 35 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £70.1m for the year to June and said it was on course to raise UK completions from 7,710 to more than 8,500 in the current year.

Investment column, page 27; People & Business, page 28

## Scotia launches diet product

Scotia, the biotechnology group, is preparing to launch a food supplement product which could replace health-scare hit weight-loss drugs in the diet regimes of millions of obese Americans. The product, called Iteal Brake, is a fat fragment from the brain that the eater is full. In trials, subjects eating a yoghurt laced with Iteal Brake consumed 15 to 30 per cent fewer calories. Skane Mejerier, the Swedish milk company, plans to launch an Iteal Brake yoghurt next year and a leading US consumer group, likely to be Unilever, Procter & Gamble or Johnson & Johnson, is developing products containing Iteal Brake which could be launched in the US in two years' time. David Horrobin, Scotia's chief executive, said the supplement had the potential to replace the phen-fen combination drugs which have been implicated in health scares in the US.

Investment column, page 27; People & Business, page 28

## Manager shuffle at Burton

Burton Group has appointed Andy King, currently managing director of Burton Menswear, as managing director of menswear brands as part of the restructuring of its multiples businesses, including Dorothy Perkins, Top Shop and Burton Menswear, into a single division. Steve Longdon, managing director of Top Shop/Top Man, becomes managing director of womenswear and Hilary Riva, managing director of DH Evans, becomes managing director of speciality brands. Stephen Sunucks, managing director of Dorothy Perkins, will become manager of new business development in the new structure. Michael Sharp and Belinda Earl have been appointed trading directors of a newly formed buying and merchandising division.

## Travel tax plan dropped

Accountants have welcomed the Inland Revenue's climbdown over proposed rules on the tax treatment of employee travel. The draft regulations would have meant that staff on business trips would have had to deduct from expense claims any savings resulting from not travelling to their normal workplace. But, following a campaign by tax professionals, officials have abandoned the plan.

## New guidelines for interims

Companies are to be encouraged to issue interim reports within 60 days of the end of an interim period and use the same bases and accounting policies as in annual financial statements under a "best practice" guidance statement published by the Accounting Standards Board today. Auditors welcomed the statement, saying it would promote greater consistency.

## Idoxifene trials start

SmithKline Beecham has started Phase III clinical trials of idoxifene for the prevention of osteoporosis, according to BTG, which funded early development work and exclusively licensed SmithKline in 1994 to develop and market all indications of idoxifene, which was first identified as a treatment for breast cancer. Pre-clinical and early clinical trials carried out by SmithKline have confirmed that idoxifene mimics the beneficial effects of oestrogen on bone density in the skeleton. BTG will receive a further milestone payment from SmithKline. This payment, together with any future milestone payments and royalties on sales, will be shared with the sources of the invention.

## Chesterfield sets aside £2.8m

Chesterfield Properties will make a £2.8m provision in the 1997 accounts as agreement has been reached over a long-running building contract dispute. The dispute relates to the development of the 207,000 sq ft office scheme at 133 Houndsditch, London, and dates back to completion of the development in 1991. Chesterfield's chief executive, Robert Marted, said: "It was my decision to end the arbitration process and negotiate a final settlement so as to concentrate management resources on building the business rather than defending a claim which could continue for years."

## Emerald Energy raises £3m

Emerald Energy is raising approximately £2.99m by placing 61.85 million new ordinary shares at 5p each with institutional clients of its sponsor, WH Ireland. Dealings are expected to commence on Monday. Emerald's chairman, Iain Alexander, said the proceeds would provide additional working capital for the company's operations in Colombia and West Virginia.



## OUTLOOK ON US BANKING MERGERS, PRIVATISING THE TUBE AND THE ENERGIS FLOTATION

# Wall Street marriage that smacks of 'me too'

Another day, another mega-corporate merger, this time between two of Wall Street's "bulge bracket" investment banks. Were there special factors driving Smith Barney and Salomon Brothers together or is this our old friend globalisation at work again?

Mercifully, the statement announcing the marriage mentions the dreaded word only once (a remarkable achievement when set against the extraordinary outpouring of global gobbledegook visited upon us by Coopers & Lybrand and Price Waterhouse last week) but there is no mistaking the general tone of what Sandy Weill, the charismatic chairman of Travelers Group, is saying here. Yes, it is all about the perceived need to get bigger and bigger to meet the challenges of a progressively integrating world economy.

This is a very similar merger to that announced earlier this year between Morgan Stanley and Dean Witter, and there is undoubtedly an element of me-too-ism in what Travelers is doing here. Again a wholesale investment bank with a substantial presence in international capital markets is being brought together with one of the US's largest retail stock brokers. Smith Barney has an outlet in every town of substance: the length and breadth of the land. As with the Morgan Stanley deal, it is not immediately apparent why a merger of two such different strands of the investment banking world should either work or yield much in the way of benefit to anyone.

While it is true that there is some potential for cost-cutting, again the lack of fundamental overlap between the two businesses may make this quite limited. There will be extensive layoffs among bond traders and analysts, but that is where the process largely stops. Size in itself will also yield some benefit in the way of cheaper capital. Furthermore, Salomon gets a ready-made and captive distribution network for its capital-raising escapades. There is also something to be said for the argument that size for the sake of it gives competitive edge by allowing executives to take risks that would be unthinkable for smaller organisations. Big companies can gobble up business opportunities in a way that smaller ones cannot.

If for no other reason than this, others in the industry, including our own dwindling band of independent integrated investment banks here in Britain, will feel themselves duty bound to respond.

But where does it all end? There's one person that always fails to get a mention in all this global corporate empire building - the poor old customer. As often as not, these mergers are more about crunching and exploiting the customer than serving him.

Deryck Maughan, chief executive of Salomon, is a sensible chap on the whole, as you would expect from a former Treasury man. He's also achieved astonishing success in restoring the Salomon name after the "rotten to the core", Bonfire of the Vanities frolics of the 1980s.

But is not this race for the "truly glob-

al corporation" its own form of vanity? Whether it will all end in a bonfire is anyone's guess but there is at least a reasonable possibility of it.

## Is Blair going down the Tube?

Is Tony Blair about to ditch another old Labour shibboleth and privatise the Tube? Before the election he was, of course opposed to the sale of London Underground. Things have a remarkable habit of looking different in office, however, particularly when the Chancellor is busy buttoning the hairshirt even tighter and the funding applications begin to roll in.

As things stand it is all but impossible to see how public ownership of the Tube can ever deliver a decent, reliable, modern transport system for the capital. The investment backlog is currently running at something like £1.5bn and is in danger of being made even worse by the Jubilee Line extension which is sucking in cash like a speeding tube train sucks in air.

Stuck in the straitjacket of public sector financing there is no way that this shortfall will ever be made good. The alternative of allowing the Underground to raise its own capital through revenue-backed bonds would simply amount to expensive government borrowing by another name.

Nnr is the sticking plaster solution of the Private Finance Initiative sufficient to heal the gaping wounds in the Under-

ground's finances. The PFI may be able to handle new rolling stock for the Northern Line but it is not equipped to fund the £400m needed every year to modernise the overall network.

A full-blooded private sector solution could prove both simple and elegant, however. Use the proceeds of flotation to fund the investment backlog and then allow commercial acumen to do the rest. Last year the Underground made an operating profit of £155m on sales of £807m and received grants of a little under £400m to invest in the core business.

In return for effectively giving the private sector the assets taxpayers could expect to reduce their ongoing funding liability. But this would be offset by the greater efficiency that private operation ought to bring to the operation of the Underground system and the cost of funding its upkeep. Whether that private sector involvement is achieved by selling off the infrastructure separately from the franchises, as with British Rail, or creating a series of vertically integrated operators owning both track, stations and passenger lines remains open.

One easy way to make the system profitable would be to close down stations which are in areas of the capital already well served - say Covent Garden - and develop the sites. That would be a stop too far. The challenge for Mr Blair and his ministers will therefore be to devise a system of ownership and control which balances public accountability with sufficient incentives to attract private capital. Pri-

vatization of the Tube may remain unpalatable to many within Mr Blair's ranks but the more important realisation is that it looks like being a bankable proposition.

## Living in hope at Energis

Here we go again. A flotation of a telephone operator with little in the way of track record and income much less profits but with a lot of hope invested. National Grid's confirmation that it is to float a minority stake in Energis made up in hyperbole what it lacked in financial detail. One suggestion is that in 10 years Energis will be worth more than the parent company itself, so great are the growth prospects in the business communications market.

Yet if other recent telecoms floats are anything to go by, the prospects are not encouraging as the experiences of Orange, Cable & Wireless Communications and the latest quoted telecoms stock Iomica, testify all too painfully. Energis may parade its flashy high tech network, but critics would no doubt point out that it lacks many of the lucrative final connections to customers.

The reality may be brighter, because Energis has wisely secured clear of the consumer market and has carved an impressive niche in providing private networks in the media and retail industries. Whether that justifies a valuation of £1bn is another matter altogether.

## Ex-Yamaichi boss held over illegal payments

Japan's racketeering scandal deepened after a former president of Yamaichi Securities was arrested and seven top Daiwa Securities executives resigned, writes Tom Stevenson.

Tokyo prosecutors said yesterday they had arrested Aisuo Miki, former president of Yamaichi Securities, for his role in alleged illegal payments to gangsters.

The arrest is the latest move, in a scandal that has touched Japan's most powerful investment houses and caused lasting damage in Tokyo's standing as a world financial centre.

Mr Miki resigned as president last month to take re-

sponsibility for the scandal, in which Yamaichi is accused of paying ¥79m (£410,000) to so-called "sokaiya" gangster Ryuichi Koike. Mr Koike is already under arrest for his role in accepting illegal payments from securities houses in exchange for not disrupting their annual meetings or exposing dubious financial practices.

Separately yesterday, Daiwa Securities said its president, chairman and five other top executives would resign at the end of the month. The departures, which mean Daiwa joins a growing list of top companies embroiled in the scandal, followed a raid on the securities house's offices last week.

Payments to sokaiya have been illegal in Japan since 1983, but firms have found it impossible to break their ties with the underworld. In Japan,

organised crime has close links with legitimate business, especially the construction and financial sectors, and ridding the system of corruption has become one of the government's greatest challenges.

The payments scandal has surfaced at a crucial time for Japan's financial industry just as it is preparing for a raft of financial reforms - dubbed, inevitably, Big Bang - designed to liberalise the country's formerly closed markets.

During the summer, Nomura and Dai-ichi Kangyo, a bank, had parts of their operations shut down as punishment for payments to the same sokaiya extortionist. More than a dozen Nomura and DKB executives were indicted and a former chairman of the bank committed suicide rather than face interrogation. Both com-

panies were banned from participating in government bond issues until next year.

Daiwa said yesterday its president and chairman had never met Mr Koike and were not involved in the scandal. They were resigning, however, to take responsibility for the damage done to the firm's credibility.

As an indication of the extent to which the resignations were simply a token gesture, Daiwa admitted that it would probably not publish an internal investigation into the pay-off affair. The firm also said the executives would remain advisers to Daiwa.

The sokaiya scandal is only part of the problem afflicting Japan in the run-up to its Big Bang. Its banks and securities houses are also accused of encouraging the asset-price in-

flation of the late 1980s and misbanding its collapse in the early 1990s. That incompetence threatens to turn Tokyo into a financial backwater - already a third of the trading in Nikkei 225 futures is in Singapore and 15 per cent of Japanese shares are traded in London.

As an attempt to reverse Tokyo's decline, Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto announced last November, a blueprint for deregulation of the tightly controlled financial markets. The barriers between banks, securities houses and other institutions will be removed, as will foreign exchange controls.

While some analysts believe Big Bang can solve some of Tokyo's problems, others think it could increase the level of corruption.

Tony Blair yesterday sought to reassure business leaders over the Government's approach to Europe and management of the economy but he failed to give any firm pledges on taking sterling into a single currency at a future point.

The Prime Minister said that Britain would play a constructive role when it takes over the presidency of the European Union next year, by backing moves to complete the single market and enlarge the EU.

But senior industrialists attending a working breakfast in Downing Street failed to hear any firm commitment from the Prime Minister in favour of economic and monetary union. He said the Government was reserving its options on the single currency.

Mr Blair also avoided re-

sponding directly to worries about the impact that the strong pound was having on exports and competitiveness, confining himself to a pledge that government policies were designed to create the stable environment in which business could flourish.

Emerging from the breakfast, businessmen were largely positive about their meeting with Mr Blair.

Sir Richard Sykes, chairman of Glaxo Wellcome, said: "The Prime Minister has a very clear understanding of business in this country, what needs to be done both in terms of the infrastructure, the human infrastructure - education, skills, getting the right people into the workplace - and in terms of what we need to be competitive in the world."

Jan Leschly, chief executive

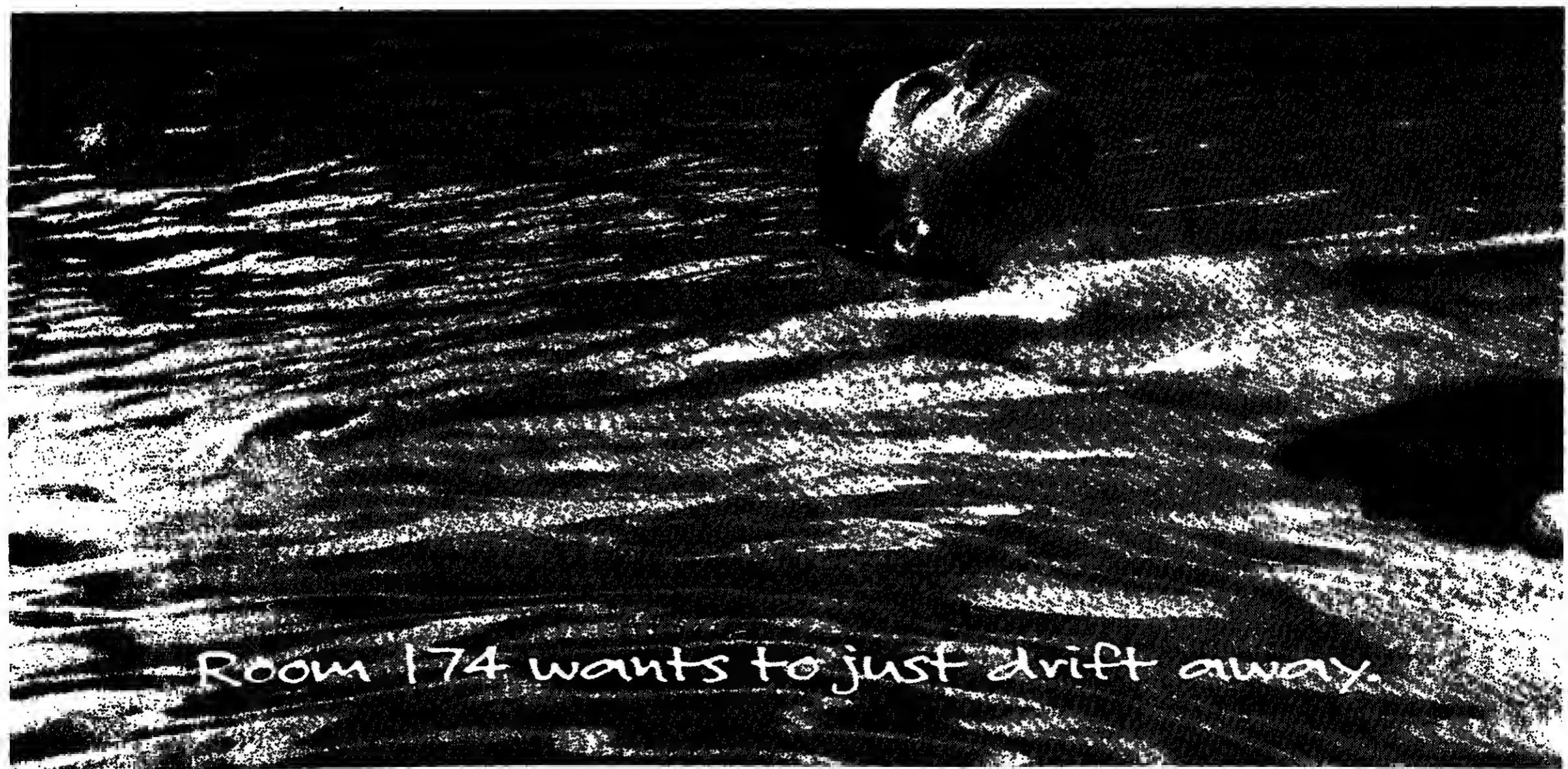
of SmithKline Beecham, argued that business wanted a single currency. "From our standpoint, we are very much in favour of a single currency... you just have to do it carefully."

Dr Walter Hasselkus, chairman of the Rover Group, described the atmosphere "as very impressive, very open".

Mr Blair also fleshed out his plans to improve the workings of Whitehall through a job swap scheme between business and the Civil Service.

A new group, headed by Cabinet Secretary Sir Robin Butler and Confederation of British Industry President Sir Colin Marshall, will oversee the development of shorter, more flexible secondments from the civil service into industry, and seconding businessmen into the civil service.

— Michael Harrison



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## Footsie within reach of record as analysts turn bullish again

### MARKET REPORT



**DEREK PAIN**  
STOCK  
MARKET  
REPORTER  
OF THE YEAR

Blue chips again nudged their best-ever levels, helped along by a series of analyst meetings and Footsie optimism from NatWest Securities.

The index closed at 5,077.2 points, up 49.7. It is the second time in three days it has moved to within hailing distance of the 5,086.8 closing peak, hit six weeks ago.

NatWest's Bob Semple can claim to be the most bullish market strategist at the start of the year when he forecast Footsie would hit 4,600. At the time it was at a then peak of 4,118.5.

In the event he was too cautious, with Footsie achieving his target long before he had expected.

Now he has moved his 12-month estimate from 5,200 to 5,600. He is, however, nervous about the performance in the next few months and has set-

ted for a year-end forecast of 4,800.

A number of influences have prompted the new Semple bullishness. He has latched onto a forecast fall in gilt yields; indications that the economy is not overheating; the shortage of new issues; and the absence of the much-feared deluge of profit downgradings in the current results season.

The better-than-expected trading, which has become increasingly evident as the season has unfolded, has been further underlined by the response to meetings between companies near to drawing up their half-year figures and analysts.

Once it completes its current trading period - six months or a year - a company usually goes into a period in which it declares its results.

Among those which have met or are meeting analysts are Granada, up 18p at 864.5p, Northern Foods (6.5p to 237p); Hazlewood Foods (6.5p to 144p) and Imperial Chemical Industries (5p to 988.5p).

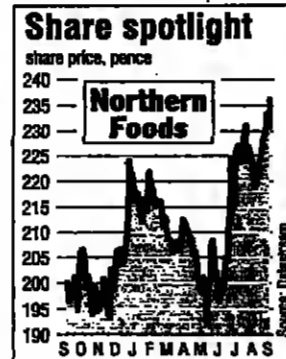
Carlton Communications met fund managers at Henderson Crosswhite on Tuesday and Booker, the cash and carry group that recently produced half-year figures, is meeting analysts today and tomorrow. Unigate is another on the analyst treadmill.

A solid New York opening, firm Gilts and even the \$900 Salomon Brothers/Travelers merger were other factors behind the latest exuberance which also gently embraced second- and third-liners.

Pubs chain Greenalls, another talking in analysts, missed the fun, falling 37.5p to 414p. And Biocompatibles In-

ternational remained in the dumps, off a further 17.5p to 457.5p.

HSBC led blue chips with a 68.5p gain to 2,007p; Railtrack, enjoying speculation about possible benefits from any privatisation of the London Underground, moved ahead 23.5p to 890.5p and Boots added 24p to 863.5p on director buying.



Shell was again the most heavily traded share with Seaq putting volume at 57 million. Derivative action was behind the activity.

Rank rose 8.5p to 353.5p as Henderson said buy and British Petroleum enjoyed buy advice from BZW, gaining 15.5p to 911.5p.

Royal Bank of Scotland hardened 12.5p to 651.5p as stories of a bid from 9.9 per cent shareholder Banco Santander of Spain resurfaced.

National Grid fell 4p to 282.5p after confirming the Energis flotation and BSKyB was ruffled by competition worries, losing 11.5p to 470.5p. Brest International, the chemical group, rose 6.5p to 86p (93.5p) in busy trading and NRC, the transport group, advanced 10.5p to 151.5p on talk of a share buy-back.

Meconic, a chemical group, produced the day's profit warning, retreating 32.5p to 315p. The shares have fallen from 422.5p since the spring.

There was talk of corporate action on the forecourt with suggestions a garage group was indulging in a cash-raising exercise. One suggestion was Sanderson Brannall, up 7.5p to 225p, was planning to renew its interest in struggling Ap-playard, the country's fifth-largest dealer.

Another takeover approach to the JLT food group lifted the shares 10.5p to 55.5p and watch maker Dailywin ticked 10p better to 112.5p on its Hong Kong listing.

The growing diplomatic crisis over the sentences on the two British nurses hit groups with strong links with Saudi Arabia. British Aerospace, for example, fell 23p to 1,627.5p.

### TAKING STOCK

More, the outdoor advertising group reporting interim figures today, is planning to transmit posters into bus shelters. It intends to fit flat television screens in shelters so it can project static displays which could be changed a number of times each day. Interim profits are likely to be around £8m (£6.2m). The shares were little changed 677p.

SIG, the acquisitive insulation group, was actively traded with a series of mixed deals going through. The price firmed up to 312.5p. It has just completed the £25.9m takeover of Roskil; further corporate action is rumoured.

Emerald Energy raised nearly £3m through a 5p share placing by stockbroker WH Ireland. The cash is needed for its Colombian and US drilling programmes. The shares held at 525p.

High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PERC	Div	Yield
40	39	Alcoholic Beverages	77.28	+0.30	87	80	0.00	0.00
41	40	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
42	41	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
43	42	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
44	43	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
45	44	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
46	45	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
47	46	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
48	47	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
49	48	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
50	49	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
51	50	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
52	51	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
53	52	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
54	53	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
55	54	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
56	55	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
57	56	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
58	57	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
59	58	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
60	59	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
61	60	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
62	61	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
63	62	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
64	63	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
65	64	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
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67	66	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
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75	74	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
76	75	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
77	76	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
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86	85	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
87	86	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
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90	89	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
91	90	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
92	91	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
93	92	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
94	93	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
95	94	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
96	95	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
97	96	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
98	97	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
99	98	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
100	99	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00

High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PERC	Div	Yield
101	100	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
102	101	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
103	102	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
104	103	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
105	104	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
106	105	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
107	106	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
108	107	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
109	108	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
110	109	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
111	110	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
112	111	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
113	112	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
114	113	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
115	114	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
116	115	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
117	116	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
118	117	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
119	118	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
120	119	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
121	120	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
122	121	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
123	122	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
124	123	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
125	124	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
126	125	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
127	126	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
128	127	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
129	128	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
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131	130	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
132	131	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
133	132	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
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139	138	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
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159	158	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
160	159	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
161	160	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
162	161	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
163	162	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
164	163	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
165	164	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
166	165	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
167	166	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
168	167	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00
169	168	Alcon	48.00	+0.10	41	41	0.00	0.00

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN  
EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMONDBarratt gets up  
from its knees

Sir Lawrie Barratt, the outgoing chairman of Barratt Developments, was making much yesterday of the group's consistent performance since his return to the chair in 1991.

He omitted to mention the £106m loss the group chalked up that year to extricate itself from some ill-advised land purchases in the late 1980s. But all that was forgotten as Sir Lawrie unveiled pre-tax profits up 35 per cent to £70.1m in what he hopes will be, finally, his valedictory year as chairman. The figure is still below the £77.5m record achieved in 1988, when he retired the first time.

But, in retrospect, that represented Barratt's high-water mark, before the overheated housing boom of the 1980s almost brought the group in its knees.

There are good grounds for believing that history will not repeat itself.

Barratt points to a much more stable market this time, while its policy of maintaining land purchases consistently through the housing recession means that it is not now having to desperately scramble for land as prices, at least in the South-

at managing director level caused by Frank Eaton's elevation to the role of executive chairman.

These may prove niggles and the US, where losses of £2m should be eliminated this year, could prove a useful outlet for Barratt's energies if the UK market becomes overblown. Meanwhile, if Barratt can turn in profits of £86m this year, the shares, up 0.5p at 264p, stand on a lowly multiple of 11. Reasonable value.

Scotia scrabbles  
for a success

Scotia's recent licensing deal for Foscan, its cancer laser treatment, looks good, but that should not blinker investors to the fact that, after eight years at the bench, the biotechnology group has still not proved the worth of its controversial oil-based technology. The agreement struck with Boehringer Ingelheim of Germany and the Japanese group Kyowa Haldio is welcome. It boosts the group's fast-depleting cash pile and gives Scotia a generous 25 per cent royalties on future sales. Though the deal breathed new life into

will eventually get approval. It is equally confident about its treatment for cancer, codenamed EF13, and EF3 for arthritis. However recent news that EF3 does not work in one group of trial patients is hardly reassuring.

The technology needs to work if Scotia is to justify the money it is ploughing into research and marketing. Increases in these costs in the half-year in June meant operating losses deepened by almost three-quarters to £13m. Even its £50m of available cash is only enough to last two years. That Scotia is already scrambling for new ways to raise funds – like a Nasdaq listing or spinning off its fast-growing outpatients business – sits uncomfortably with the view of David Horrobin, chief executive, that Scotia will be cash-positive by 2000. Until Scotia scores a drug success, the shares are high enough.

Regent remains a  
money-spinner

Regent is one of the many go-go pub stocks which have been able to achieve both booming profits and a soaring share price. That was until six months ago. Since then, Regent's shares have slumped. From a high of 373.5p, they have dropped to 324p, down another 12.5p yesterday despite the announcement of a 57 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £12.6m for the year to July.

The fall has been caused by fears that Regent will be hard pushed to sustain this growth rate. It is true that the rate of expansion is bound to slow.

Like-for-like sales growth is running at 7 per cent, which compares with the double-digit growth the group has achieved over the past few years. Even so, Regent should still be able to increase profits by at least 30 per cent both this year and next. It plans to open 30 pubs in the next 12 months, close to double last year's total of 17.

Given that most of the group's estate still lies within the M25, there is plenty of scope to expand across the country. It has already gained a foothold in the Midlands and the North.

Its new pub brands, such as Walkabout Inns, a chain of Australian theme bars, are going great guns.

The nationwide expansion of its Jangle comedy club should also prove to be a money-spinner.

The fear is that sites will eventually dry up as competitors scramble for the choice locations, while the length of time taken to get a licence grows all the time. However that should not hinder Regent unduly for the next few years at least.

Wise Speke forecasts current year profits of £16.5m, putting the shares on a prospective price/earnings ratio of 20.

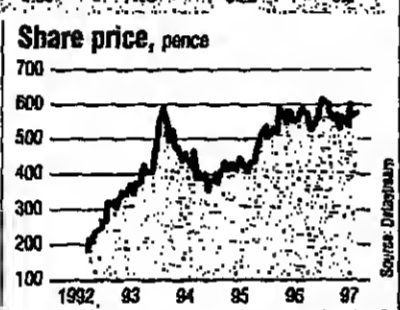
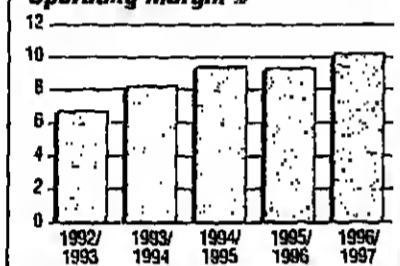
The group's great growth potential justifies this premium rating. In fact the recent slide in the share price makes Regent look attractive.

## Barratt Developments: At a glance

Market value: £612m, share price 264p (+0.5p)

Five-year record	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Turnover (£m)	405	499	579	634	714
Pre-tax profits (£m)	20.1	35.2	42.1	58	70.1
Earnings per share (p)	8.8	12.2	15.2	17.8	25.0
Dividends per share (p)	3.75	5.00	7.00	8.25	9.50

## Operating margin %



east, move rapidly against them.

Barratt's target of achieving 11,000 completions by the year 2000 looks well on course, with last year's 7,710 likely to rise to above 8,500 this year.

The gearing effect could be substantial: last year's 10 per cent rise in volumes and 4 per cent rise in average prices produced a 35 per cent jump in profits.

But caveats remain. The cost of land bank purchases is creeping up. Last year they rose from 21.8 to 24.5 per cent of eventual selling prices as the group splashed out in the expensive South-east.

Barratt also remains exposed to the interest-rate sensitive first-time buyer market, which accounts for 25 per cent of sales. The group must also fill the gap

Scotia's shares, which picked up a further 18.5p to 436p on yesterday's interim results, the price has still not recovered from the news in March that Tarabatic, Scotia's lead drug for diabetic nerve damage, which has been under development since 1991, failed to win UK approval. That announcement lopped almost a quarter off the group's value to a day.

Scotia must prove that it can turn evening primrose oil into real prescription drugs, not just food supplements and treatments for ailments such as eczema. Most other drug groups have already dismissed oil-based technology in favour of proteins. The question is whether Scotia knows something that the others do not. The company believes that Tarabatic



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IPE considers  
electronic  
dealing switch

The International Petroleum Exchange has set up a committee to examine whether it should continue with its current system of open outcry floor trading or switch to electronic dealing. It is also looking at proposals that it should stop being a member-owned exchange in favour of converting to a normal for-profit company owned by shareholders.

Richard Reinert, chairman of the IPE board of directors, said: "There has clearly been a groundswell of opinion from prominent and active members that these two fundamental issues need to be considered before making long-term decisions about the future of the IPE."

The cost of moving to better premises and retaining open outcry has been estimated at £5m. In addition, IPE is already committed to a share of the costs of rebuilding the Trade Registration System it shares with other futures exchanges such as the London International Financial Futures Exchange (LIFFE).

The relative merits of open outcry trading and more modern electronic systems was thrown under the spotlight last week by an alliance between France's Matif futures market and Germany's and Switzerland's Eurex joint venture. The combined trading group, mainly using electronic trading, is being seen as a deliberate attempt to challenge LIFFE's traditional floor trading, which has so far dominated Europe's derivatives trading.

## Telewest charges to carry channels

Telewest Communications is to charge TV broadcasters for using its cable network. Cathy Newman reports on the latest initiative by the ailing cable industry.

Telewest, the second-largest UK cable company, said yesterday it had agreed to carry an unnamed analogue cable channel in return for a seven-figure sum. The decision is unprecedented for cable companies, which pay programmers such as BSkyB to carry channels.

A spokesman for Telewest said: "The formula for negotiations with channel providers is changing. Whereas in the past, analogue capacity was freely available, and cable companies were seeking new content, analogue capacity is now at a premium, and many more channels are available."

Telewest's network carries around 50 analogue channels. The company's spokesman said yesterday there was "precious little" spare capacity left.

He said the company was discussing the proposals with other channel providers. Theoretically, BSkyB could be forced to pay Telewest to carry its channels in the future, but the negotiations at this stage are thought to focus on new channels and those hoping to renew carriage contracts with the cable company. Smaller niche-oriented channels are likely to be hardest hit by Telewest's change of strategy.

Cable companies such as Telewest have attacked the high fees charged by BSkyB and other programmers, which have consistently eroded margins. In the first half of the year, Telewest's gross margin on cable television dropped to 39.3 per cent and the company has been forced to cut costs.

Last month, Telewest, which serves almost 600,000 of the 2



Stephen Davidson: Behind the decision to charge

million cable television homes in the UK, announced plans to slash 1,400 jobs in a restructuring designed to cut costs by 30 per cent a year.

The cable company's decision to charge channels for car-

riage is the latest initiative adopted by its chief executive, Stephen Davidson, in the battle to squeeze more value out of its programme providers. Last month, the company refused to carry Sky's National Geographic Channel and dropped Sky News in areas where it was not contractually obliged to take the service. Sky News will, in these regions, be replaced by the BBC's 24-hour news service.

However, the cable industry has been fragmented in its opposition to BSkyB. Cable & Wireless Communications, the largest cable group, broke ranks with the rest of the industry almost a month ago when reports surfaced that it had agreed to use the satellite broadcaster as its exclusive pay-per-view supplier. Although no announcement has yet been made, news of the negotiations undermined attempts by a consortium of other cable companies to form their own pay-per-view venture.

## One2One gets US West chief Improving Brake's shares jump

US West yesterday stamped its authority on One2One, the mobile phone network which it jointly owns with Cable & Wireless, by appointing its second executive in a row as managing director.

Tim Samples, currently vice-president of US West's domestic wireless operations, will take over at the helm on 1 October. The move follows the recent surprise news that Jan Peters, the American managing director credited with turning round One2One's fortunes, was returning to the states to take a better job with US West.

The appointment of another US West figure is likely to quash any speculation that the company was under pressure to sell its stake in the network to C&W, which has yet to incorporate a mobile business into Cable & Wireless Communications, its £4bn merged telecommunications group. US

West and C&W collaborate in other parts of the world, but have also had a difficult relationship in the past.

Speaking from the US last night, Mr Samples, 39, said he could not comment on the issue of One2One's long-term ownership, though on past experience he was likely to stay at least three years in the post. "Both partners are very pleased with the momentum and they're very anxious to keep up the pace," he said, adding that it would be premature to suggest any changes to the business.

Under Ms Peters One2One expanded its coverage outside its traditional base of London and the South-east under a billion-pound investment programme. A high-profile television advertising campaign saw customer growth soar above Vodafone and Cellnet, the two market leaders, in the first months of the year.

— Chris Godsmark

Shares in Brake Brothers, the catering supplies group, rose 15.5p to 489p yesterday after the company claimed to have cracked most of the problems at its troubled Puritan Maid food distribution operation.

Even so, there was a warning of further losses to come after "severe problems" at the business slashed the group's profits in the half-year to June.

Frank Brake, chairman, yesterday hailed the business as "one of the biggest successes in the first half of 1997". According to Mr Brake, the worst at Puritan Maid was over. The rescue operation had been a success, he said, adding that recent months had seen significant reductions in costs. The Board is confident that Puritan Maid will break even by 1998.

A series of "inappropriate contracts" resulting from "management misjudgement" were blamed for the downturn

at the business, acquired from Forte in November 1995.

Puritan Maid saw operating profits of £1m turn into a loss of £3.9m in the latest figures, in line with expectations following a warning in December, when Brake's shares crashed. The group said that a further "small loss" was also likely in the second half.

Sorting out Puritan Maid has involved restructuring some contracts and terminating others. It has also been costly – first-half Puritan Maid operating expenses were up by almost 40 per cent on last year. The resulting losses more than wiped out a 12 per cent jump in profits in the core frozen foods distribution business.

Overall, group profits slid 13 per cent to £11.2m in the six months to June, although the half-year dividend rises 10 per cent to 3.2p.

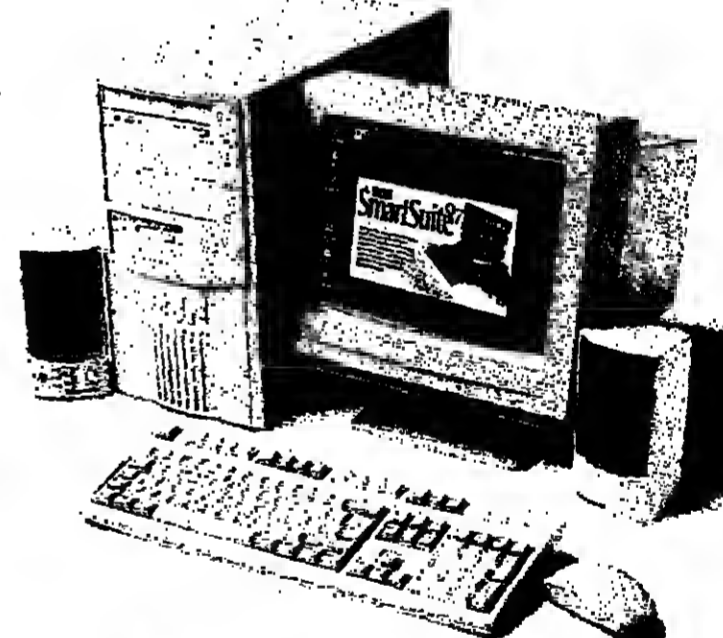
— Leo Paterson

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## Good government will bring financial markets to heel

The pace of progress at the annual World Bank and International Monetary Fund meetings is, usually, glacial. The assorted dignitaries can spend years talking in impenetrable jargon about decisions whose implications are, to all except aficionados, completely obscure. This year's meeting in Hong Kong brought, by contrast, big and even startling developments.

Some of them were less obviously exciting than others. For instance, the IMF got the go-ahead for a quota increase and redistribution and a special allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDR). Dry as it sounds, this subject caused a massive row between the developed and developing nations three years ago, and delicate negotiations have been going on ever since. What it means is that member governments have agreed to increase the IMF's capital by 45 per cent, and tilt the balance of shareholding in the fund to better reflect the growing economic strength of newly industrialised countries.

In addition, the new allocation of the IMF's Special Drawing Rights, its basket currency, will also give member countries a fair share. These apparently technical housekeeping agreements are part of the process of giving fast-growing countries a greater voice in the international financial institutions.

Of more obvious interest was the unexpected focus of the meetings on what the IMF and World Bank should be doing in



DIANE  
COYLE  
ON LESSONS  
LEARN'T  
AT THE IMF  
JAMBOREE

the modern world, and the consensus that the answer is reducing poverty, furthering social goals, making government more open and transparent, and cracking down on corruption. In short, the delegates talked about how to make the world a better place, and agreed on the steps needed even though in some cases this was inevitably only a matter of paying lip service.

However, this surprise agreement on the ends produced a fissure between the developed and developing countries over the means. The new split showed up in several ways, most dramatically in the war of words between Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, and the financier George Soros. But it was also revealed by the developing countries' resistance to plans for the IMF to enhance the free flow of capital around the world, and by surprise Japanese proposals for an Asian Monetary Fund whereby Asian neighbours would give each other financial support.

The disagreement boils down to one group of countries having second thoughts about capital liberalisation after this summer's currency and stock market crisis in South-east Asia. There was a fear amongst developing country finance ministers and bankers that if global capital could do this to the Tiger economies then nobody would be safe from the risk of a sudden crisis. They put out a statement saying that while they would support "orderly" capital liberalisation, it must not be allowed to put too

much stress on countries already struggling to adjust to globalisation. They gave only tentative backing to the IMF's wish to amend its articles to make freedom of capital movements as well as free movement of goods and services fundamental to its operations.

These hesitations were reflected in support for the idea of an Asian Monetary Fund, a \$100bn (£62bn) fund that would stand ready to support any country in the region that got into the kind of crisis they have seen this summer. The fund would therefore be a kind of barrier that could be raised when the tides of free capital became too disruptive.

There are some good arguments against putting this kind of defence system in place, the main one being the question of "moral hazard". This means simply that investors would take bigger risks knowing that a large pot of money was ultimately available to bail them out than they would if there was no safety net.

With investors in Mexico rescued in 1995, and investors in Thailand in 1997, how long would it be before another country facing a run on its currency decided the time had come to activate the new fund?

However, the point is that the battered Asian economies are keen to sign up to such a fund because they feel they need protecting from the odd hurricane in the financial markets. After this summer, free capital flows look pretty destructive.

The debate was of course at its starkest in Hong Kong in the high drama - or was it farce? - of the Mahathir/Soros debate. Mr Mahathir complained: "Quite a few people who are in the media and in control of the big money seem to want to see these South-east Asian countries and in particular Malaysia stop trying to catch up with their superiors and know their place." He touched - rightly - on the fear of many in the developed world that countries like Malaysia are "stealing" jobs and business. As he put it: "In the yellow peril of yesterday will be added the brown peril. The Europeans will be overwhelmed."

Mr Mahathir is quite right to condemn this for both its racism and its falsehood. As he said in the speech, world-wide trade and investment do not add up to a zero-sum game where one country's gain is another's loss. He also reflected a widespread feeling that trading in the international capital markets is divorced from anything real that is going on in the world. "No real money is involved, only figures," he said.

Although the outspoken Prime Minister went well beyond logic in concluding that currency trading must therefore be banned, his speech did reflect in extreme form some of the oer concerns in South-east Asia. His opponent in the debate also conceded that there were problems with global capitalism. George Soros said: "Financial markets are inherently unstable and international financial markets even

more so. International capital flows are notorious for their boom-bust pattern."

However, he concluded, not that governments should try to ban the markets. Malaysian style, but rather that the existence of the global markets demands a different kind of government. Broadly speaking, an open and democratic government will be less vulnerable to the deficiencies of financial markets - and he criticised Asian governments for clinging to an autocratic and corrupt politics.

The world's most famous financier therefore ended up reaching the same conclusion as the finance ministers and central bank governors: the next big issue in economic progress is better government. But until that lesson is put into practice, the IMF will find it heavy-going on its plans for capital liberalisation. The experience of the 1930s, when the international financial system broke down, suggests that financial crises do nothing to improve the prospects of open government.

Nor is there anything to suggest that this summer's crisis has prodded South-east Asia on to a higher political plane. The Thai government is in turmoil, while Mr Mahathir's autocratic tendencies seem to have been reinforced. Free markets police bad governments very effectively, but free markets do not necessarily improve bad governments. These have to want to improve themselves to reap the benefits of economic liberalisation.

## PEOPLE & BUSINESS

### JOHN WILLCOCK



A huge gang of marauding regulators burst upon an unsuspecting Canary Wharf in London's Docklands yesterday to give their new head office the once-over.

The 30-plus party of sightseers from NewRo, the proposed body formed from seven investment regulators, was led by its leader elect, Howard Davies, who chose the new location. Which is pretty brave of Mr Davies, considering he lives in Farway Ealing, on the other side of London.

The visitors swarmed off the Docklands Light Railway sporting little name badges on their lapels - DTI, Bank of England, SIB and so on. Even the transport system got into the spirit of the occasion, flashing up "DLR welcomes NewRo" on its electronic office board.

More than 2,100 bureaucrats will move to the building

at 25 North Colonnade which contains more than 363,000 square feet of office space.

The capture of NewRo means that Canary Wharf, only half-let during the recession, is now more than 90 per cent full, although the top 11 floors of the tower are still available. There is also new building, so by next month Canary Wharf will have 1,635,000 square feet of office space under construction.

One regulator said the guided tours were in order to "win hearts and minds" for the location. "A lot of people never been there and have only read about it in the press." Yesterday's was just the first of a large number of visits planned.

The regulator source adds: "We're hoping the Jubilee Line underground extension to Canary Wharf will open on time next September - that's when we move in."

The drugs group Scotia is introducing an appetite suppressant for slimmers called "Real Brake", a naturally occurring drug which sends signals to your brain saying your tummy's full so you end up eating 30 per cent fewer calories per meal.

A Swedish company is already using it in yoghurts, as Scotia's chairman, Sir James McKinnon, found to his cost. He was in Stockholm to help celebrate the 10th anniversary of a Scotia subsidiary called LipidTeknik, and attended a sumptuous feast to that end. He tried one of the yoghurts, not knowing it contained the new drug, liked it and had another one. The result was he felt stuffed and couldn't manage a morsel of the feast. There's a moral in there somewhere.

The normally gritty Sir Lawrie Barratt, the grand old man of the house-building industry, was in an elegant mood yesterday as he contemplated his retirement as chairman of Barratt Developments, the group he founded, for the second time. Never one to hide his light under a bushel, he said his greatest achievement in 44 years in the business was "assisting the explosion of home ownership which has taken place. Assisting the growth from 4 million families to 12 million families [which own their own home]. I have consistently strived to make that possible and the industry has consistently followed."

Despite her famous refusal to live in a Barratt home in Dulwich, South-east London, he also still clearly holds a candle for Margaret Thatcher. He quite understood her desire to live closer in to London, he said, but deep down she was like all

women. "Men want a new car, but 90 per cent of women want a new house."

Even so, he retains his customary disdain for those who dabble in politics. Archie Norman, Lord Simon, Martin Taylor and the like who are prepared to sup with the Labour Government get short shrift. "It will all unfold. It will all end in tears." As for himself and politics: "I wouldn't waste my time."

Instead he will keep an eye on his old business as life president and will keep his hands full running three homes and a yacht in the south of France.

Hardly the country gentry, Sir Lawrie insists he is an organiser and you can see his point. Twenty-five acres in Northumberland might be enough for one person, but his 4,500-acre Farndale Estate in the Yorkshire dales sounds like a full-time job in itself. Famous

for its annual display of daffodils, Farndale boasts 22 let farms, 150 acres of woodland and a shoot with pheasants, grouse, duck and partridge.

Sir Lawrie has no time for those who make their pile and quit the country to live in a tax haven. "I pay my taxes in this country and enjoy the British way of life." And long may it be so.

Thames Water has appointed its managing director, Bill Alexander, as chief executive from 1 October. The company's chairman, former United Biscuits boss Sir Robert Clarke, will continue until his retirement in the spring of 1999. Sir Robert said: "There will be a gradual handover of my executive responsibilities over the next 18 months. It is anticipated that my successor as chairman will be non-executive." The company added that its strategy director,

Bill Harper, would leave at the end of the year.

Speaking of which, whatever happened to Mike Hoffman, Thames Water's chief executive until March 1996? Mr Hoffman disappeared into obscurity with his payoff after eight years leading an international diversification strategy for the utility, which it abruptly put into reverse last year.

The former head of Water Services Association of England and Wales left Thames Water with a payoff of around £500,000, plus options worth another £500,000 and Thames Water shares worth £400,000.

It appears Mr Hoffman is still busy with three non-executive directorships. He picked up one at Homby, the train sets maker, in January, and he is a non exec at PowerGen and Anite Group, which changed its name from Cray Electronics Holdings.

### Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	1 month	3 month	D-Mark
UK	10000	22300	22300	22300	33000
Australia	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000
Canada	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000
France	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000
Germany	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000
Italy	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000
Japan	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000
Netherlands	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000
Sweden	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000
Switzerland	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000
US	22300	22300	22300	22300	33000

### Interest Rates

UK	Germany	US	Japan
Base	7.00%	Discount	5.50%
Discount	4.50%	Discount	5.00%
Prime	4.75%	Prime	5.25%
3 month	4.50%	3 month	5.00%
6 month	4.50%	6 month	5.00%
1 year	4.50%	1 year	5.00%

### Life Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Open
Long GR	Dec-97	1794	1807	1807
German Bund	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037
US Long Bond	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037
Japan Govt	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037

### Industrial Metals

Commodity	Settlement	High	Low	Open
Aluminum	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037
Copper	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037
Gold	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037

### Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1817	10000
Brazil	1817	10000
Canada	1817	10000

### Money Market Rates

	Overnight	1 week	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
	Bid Offer	Bid Offer	Bid Offer	Bid Offer	Bid Offer	Bid Offer
Treasury Bills			837 834	837 834		
LIBOR						
Bankers Depos	634 726	634 726	726 735	726 735	731 738	744 750
Banking Depos	637 733	720 728	738 746	732 738	741 744	750 752
Fixed Bank Bills			757 771	768 720	76 706	
Swapping Cds			759 773	732 735	731 735	738 731
Starting Cds			561	570	582	
3-month Cds			413 426	431 436	436 434	
EDU Deposits						

### Commodity Indices

Commodity	Settlement	High	Low	Open
Oil	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037
Gold	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037

### Other Softs

Commodity	Settlement	High	Low	Open
Soybeans	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037
Wheat	Dec-97	1025	1037	1037

### Latest Unit Trust Prices

Unit Trust	Price	Unit Trust	Price
Investment	1.00	Investment	1.00
Investment	1.00	Investment	1.00

Unit Trust	Price	Unit Trust	Price
Investment	1.00	Investment	1.00
Investment	1.00	Investment	1.00

Unit Trust	Price	Unit Trust	Price
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Unit Trust	Price	Unit Trust	Price
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Spice Girls to play for Mandela

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## GOLF: RYDER CUP

### Furyk drives full swing on rookies' road

Of the four Americans making their debut in this week's Ryder Cup, one is known mainly for his looping swing. Jim Furyk's action may not be beautiful, but it is very effective and, being one of the best putters on the US Tour, he could be a major player. Andy Farrell has been watching his preparation in Valderrama.

"Rookies?" said Colin Montgomerie. "You can't really call them rookies, can you?" Of the four men representing the United States for the first time in the Ryder Cup, two are major champions this season and another is 41 years old.

Scott Hoch, who will gladly talk to you at length about how he should have been picked for the US team before now, finally managed to qualify this time round. This year Tiger Woods claimed a Green Jacket at the US Masters in the most emphatic way possible, while at Royal Troon in July Justin Leonard produced a performance of maturity beyond his years to lift the Open's daret jug. But what of Jim Furyk?

If you know anything about Furyk, it will be concerning his golf swing. This is not a thing of beauty. Comparison for a European audience will be made with the eccentric action of Eamonn Darcy. For graphic visualisation, you need only turn to the words of David Feherty, who said Furyk's swing was "like an octopus in a phone booth".

Even Furyk was surprised quite how much a loop he possesses when he saw his swing replayed in slow motion for the first time. Not that the 27-year-old graduate of the University of Arizona cares too much what is said. You can hardly win twice in the last two

years on the US Tour and not possess the mental fortitude to be concerned about aesthetics. It is not what it looks like, but how it works. Furyk's swing works rather well.

Although without a victory this year in America, Furyk is showing distinct signs of consolidating his progress by turning into a highly consistent performer in the major championships. He was fifth at the US Open, fourth at Troon and sixth at the USPGA. This was part of a sequence of nine top-10 finishes in 10 events.

"What would be a good week for me is to do what Jim Furyk has done in '97," he said. "You can put too much pressure on yourself to try and play better than you can. I want to contribute to the team is what I have been doing all year."

That includes being one of the best putters on the US tour, up there with his teammates Brad Faxon and Loren Roberts. This could make Furyk a significant player in the plans of his captain, Tom Kite.

He was taught to putt cross-handed by his father, Mike, a former rep for an equipment company, who has been Furyk's only teacher. "He's my eyes," Furyk said of his father's role in his coaching.

Furyk partnered Phil Mickelson and Tom Lehman on the first two days of practice and has been surprised at how much Kite has consulted his players over such matters. "Even with his captain's picks, he wanted to know our opinion. I was caught on the hop. When I said that my zero Ryder Cups was not looking good against his seven, and that I'd be happy with whatever he decided, he said that was not the answer he was looking for and wanted to know what I thought. I'm sure he has been staying up late working on his puttings."

The impression, confirmed by those who cover the American circuit, is of a nice guy who prefers to keep a low profile.



Someone to watch over: Nick Faldo (left) takes an unfamiliarly paternal approach to the progress of Ryder Cup rookie Lee Westwood yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

### Faldo now the overseer as he abandons one-eyed approach

From the sound of things Nick Faldo interprets senior status as an opportunity to prove that he is not without consideration for others. "If I'm paired with a rookie it will be my responsibility to shield him from the bullets," he said yesterday.

Faldo's resilience is magnificently illustrated by six victories in major championships and a record of 11 Ryder Cup appearances, but benevolence does not fit with his reputation.

On these occasions Faldo is sure to be reminded of his failure to assist David Gilford when they were defeated 7 and 6 by Paul Azinger and Mark O'Meara in 1991 at Kiawah Island. Attaching no blame to himself, Faldo insists that it was an error in selection. Gilford may have a different point of view, one that is still held against Fal-

do when proceedings at Kiawah crop up in conversation. One of the advantages Faldo still possesses over most of his rivals in strokeplay is concentration. Unfortunately, this does not always allow for what teamwork means to the other fellow. Single-mindedness is a strength but in the context of a Ryder Cup it can be a weakness.

Consequently, Faldo's assertion that Europe's debutants are guaranteed the benefit of his experience and wisdom caused a raising of eyebrows. "Let's wait and see," was once cynical observation.

The notion of Faldo as paternal figure is, to say the least, an interesting development, one that works greatly to Europe's advantage. "It will be important to take the pressure off the younger guys," he said, "just let

them play and be themselves or be better than themselves. Set them free. That was the way I felt when I was starting and I think that's what we've seen over the years. We've got to let them free-wheel it."

It was early in the day and Faldo was sitting alongside Colin Montgomerie, who is younger by five years but no stranger to the Ryder Cup experience. "It's difficult to describe what you feel in your first Ryder Cup," he said, "but we're all more light-hearted today than we'll be on Friday. It's important to try and relax."

The impression you often get is that a calm state of mind is as

foreign to Montgomerie as concern for others has been for Faldo. When things are going well the Scot has the sunniest disposition imaginable but misfortune can seriously alter his demeanour.

It remains to be seen whether Faldo can shrug off the disappointments of a pretty bleak season, especially when he has had a putter in his hands, but later in the day he was out on the course watching one of Europe's rookies, Lee Westwood, as though eager to put paternalism into practice.

Typically, you may think, the Ryder Cup that Faldo recalls with least affection was at The

Belfry in 1985 when the US were rolled over for the first time in 28 years. Yet to fashion the swing that would bring a flood of majors, Faldo was only selected for two matches and failed to score a point. "It was a pretty miserable time for me," he said. "I wasn't playing well and didn't really feel a part of things. I was told that I shouldn't be out there and to give someone else a chance. But if that was the low point, fortunately there have been a lot of highs. All the matches have been memorable."

The confidence exuded by Faldo and Montgomerie induces optimism in the European supporters who are presently swarming all over Valderrama. And it is given impetus by Severiano Ballesteros's recurring stubbornness whenever the idea of a US victory is put to him.

According to Faldo and Montgomerie, the captain is doing fine. "Seve's intensity in trying to beat the Americans is second to none and it's showing," Montgomerie added.

Faldo weighed in with an assessment of Ballesteros as compared with the two past captains, Tony Jacklin and Bernard Gallacher. "As the week goes on Seve is sure to get tougher," he said. "He's got pairings and orders to put in and that's when the intensity of the job really comes into it. But we are all there and we are going to help. I don't think he is going to put us into situations where players feel uncomfortable."

Faldo's introspection on the golf course is famous but, for the time being at least, he actually sounds like a team player.

### Woodward trims squad to current specifications

Clive Woodward has yet to settle on the style of play he will launch on the All Blacks, the Springboks and the Wallabies this autumn. But, as Chris Hewett reveals, England's new rugby union coach has identified areas of concern.

This time last week, England's interim Test squad resembled

the cast list of *Ben Hur* - numerically, if not visually. Yesterday, Clive Woodward eased his way through his first training session as national coach by engaging in a meeting of minds with the streamlined version: 23 players, largely drawn from this summer's Lions contingent, who will form the backbone of the imminent three-pronged assault on the southern hemisphere powerbrokers, beginning with Australia at Twickenham on 15 November.

Woodward agreed that some sections of the initial 77-strong

party had been hacked back more brutally than others. Only two props were invited to the Bisham Abbey get-together - the England incumbents, Graham Rowntree and Jason Leonard - while wings specialists were equally thin on the ground, just John Bentley and Aledaayo Adeboye being there. The coach clearly believes that, if some of his cupboard shelves are stacked with goods, others are bare.

"I suppose you could say that those two areas are of the most immediate interest in terms of strength in depth," he

said, confirming his intention to tinker with the squad weekly, on the basis of current form. "On this occasion, I simply imagined that England were playing the All Blacks this weekend and chose those I could realistically see taking the field against them. It will change as time goes on."

"We have three more mid-week sessions together before the Wallaby match, which isn't many. I've made it clear to every player here that now is not the time for celebration. Form is everything. Next week, we

could have more than 23 players here; we could have less."

One of the few certainties to emerge in these early days of Woodward's stewardship is that Rob Smith, the Wasps coach, will join Richard Hill, of Gloucester, in handling England's A side, while London's Phil Keith-Roach, who has extensive experience at divisional level, will contribute as a scrumming advisor. Woodward has also pulled in Jim Blair, the highly regarded fitness guru from New Zealand, "for as long as we can afford him."

But the new regime has yet to solve one very old coaching conundrum: namely, how to persuade the Rugby Football Union that Dave Alred should play an integral role in big-match preparation. Alred, without question the most successful kicking coach in world rugby, remains a frustrated outsider, despite his unquestioned achievements with Neil Jenkins and England's own Tim Stimpson on the Lions tour. "We need a specialist but it's not yet sorted," Woodward admitted.

SPORT

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## TENNIS: GRAND SLAM CUP

### Becker leaves his options open as he prepares for a long goodbye

Boris Becker, given a wild card for the \$6m Compaq Grand Slam Cup, was beaten in the first round by Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman in Munich yesterday. John Roberts looks at what the future holds for the semi-retired three-times Wimbledon champion.

The organisers were leaving their options open. "Auf Wiedersehen, Boris Becker," declared the announcer in the Olympic Hall as Germany's tennis icon packed his bag, waved and departed from the Compaq Grand Slam Cup. Goodbye, until the next time.

Becker took exception to the "goodbye" bit. "Unfortunately, the speaker in the hall announced that," he said. "I don't know how he got that information. He didn't get it from me. I cannot definitely say that I won't play here any more."

Triumphant here last year, eliminated by Sweden's Jonas

Bjorkman, 6-3, 6-2, in the opening round yesterday after being ushered into the event with a wild card, the idol does not intend to be idle - except when the Grand Slam championships are played. "Obviously, I won't play Grand Slams anymore, and I won't play a full schedule," Becker said.

Since qualification for the Munich dollarfest is decided on results in the four major championships, how can he expect to be considered for a similar exemption next year?

"I don't expect it," Becker responded. "It has to be decided by the Grand Slam chairmen and the company of the Compaq Grand Slam Cup. It really depends on my form. If I'm able to produce the sort of tennis which gives me a chance to play well, and to win those kind of tournaments, then I will play."

Becker says he is motivated to continue as a part-time player, with the Davis Cup a priority, until replacements emerge to fill the gap in German tennis left by himself and Michael Stich. That is like Britain waiting for another Fred Perry.

Valedictions were written during Wimbledon in July, after Becker confirmed his decision to retire from major championships to Pete Sampras over the Centre Court net after losing to the world No 1 in the quarter-finals.

The death of his manager, Axel Meyer-Walden, the founder and chairman of the Grand Slam Cup, prevented Becker from competing in the US Open last month. Although adamant that he is no longer prepared to put in the effort demanded of Grand Slams, speculation regarding a change of heart is bound to increase ahead of Wimbledon. If fit and in reasonable form, would he be able to resist the temptation?

"You know," he said, "we are in September right now. I can speak calmly about Wimbledon of next year. By the time the tournament comes around, I'm probably going to be very nervous and very tempted to play. But I hope I'm wise enough and smart enough to have people holding me back."

### Winter sports feeling the pinch

As Britain's competitors reach the critical preparation period for this February's Winter Olympics, they have yet to receive a penny of promised National Lottery funding. Mike Rowbottom found a mood of increasing anger at yesterday's annual meeting of the British Olympic Association.

Britain's chances of significant success at the Winter Olympics starting in Japan on 5-February next year are receding fast in the absence of financial assistance.

Craig Reddie, chairman of the BOA, launched a strong attack yesterday on the National Lottery distribution process, which he described as "unnecessarily bureaucratic and cumbersome".

He added: "Financial support that is currently in a logjam has to be unlocked if British teams are to have a chance of success at the winter Olympics."

Following the outcry over the relatively poor British performance at the Atlanta Olympics, which yielded just one gold medal, the launch of the Lottery's World Class Performance programme in November held out the hope of substantial assistance for competitors in future events.

But, nearly a year on, only a handful of sports have received Lottery money - none of them winter sports. The delay threatens to undermine the prospects of those British sports which

have the best chance of earning medals in Nagano - bobsleigh, speed skating and curling. The British Paralympic team in Nagano is also without funding.

"Joe Public pays his nine pound on Wednesday and Saturday and thinks he is helping British sport," Paul Prusinski, a director of the British Bobsleigh Association, said. "But where is all this money? Sitting in some bank account making an enormous amount of interest for someone while our governing bodies are cash-strapped. What is going on?"

The British bobsleigh team, who finished fourth in last year's World Championships, will compete in Calgary on 4 November in the first of this season's World Cup events. The competition determines seedings for the Games and is vital to any chance of success.

Under the current system of Lottery distribution, application has to be made to the recently instituted UK Sports Council, but once their criteria have been satisfied, the actual payment to sports has to be administered by each of the four home sports councils.

Reddie who has been part of the consultation process for the Government's forthcoming White Paper, *The People's Lottery*, said: "We have to change the rules of distribution, and we have to change them quickly, because we simply cannot go on like this in the long term."

He also criticised the sports councils for overstepping their powers. "Their role is to support, not to have pretensions of leading British sport forward," he said. "This is the issue which we would like the Government to take on board."

Pallister in the clear as referee backs down

## FOOTBALL

Pallister in  
the clear as  
referee  
backs down

Manchester United have succeeded in overturning an official's decision to show a red card to one of their players last weekend. Tommy Staniforth reveals all.

Gary Pallister was yesterday cleared of the first red card of his Manchester United career after the Old Trafford club's public lobbying of the referee, Paul Durkin, paid off.

The England defender faced a three-match ban after he was dismissed after a clash with the Bolton striker, Nathan Blake, in Saturday's game at the Reebok Stadium.

Durkin, who said initially that he did not need to study a video of the incident, relented after watching the pictures and ruled that Pallister should only have had a yellow card for "adopting an aggressive attitude".

Blake caught the back of Pallister's leg after the ball had gone and the pair squared up to each other twice. But Pallister kept his arms by his side as Blake struck him and was disgusted when Durkin produced the red card, the first time he had been sent off in his eight years at Old Trafford.

The United manager Alex Ferguson, enraged by the decision, sent a video of the incident to the Football Association. But before the tape arrived at Lancaster Gate, Durkin decided that he had made a mistake and should not have sent Pallister off.

Tony Yeboah yesterday ended his troubled time at Leeds United by completing his £1m move to the Bundesliga club, Hamburg.

The Ghanaian's move back to Germany - where he formerly played for Saarbrücken and Eintracht Frankfurt - had been delayed due to tax problems. These have now been solved and Yeboah, 31, has signed a two-year contract at Hamburg, despite late interest from the Turkish side Trabzonspor and Lecce of Italy.

Celtic have learned that they will not receive a fee for their former midfielder, John Collins, who left Parkhead for Monaco last year under the Bosman ruling on a free transfer.

Celtic's managing director, Fergus McCann, argued that, as Monaco is not part of the European Union, its laws on free movement of workers should not apply and that his club

should have earned a fee for the Scotland midfielder.

However, yesterday Celtic were told that Fifa, world football's governing body, has rejected their appeal for payment and that their case was not helped by an alleged error by the Scottish Football Association.

In a statement, the club said: "We are surprised and disappointed the appeal to Fifa in this case has been rejected. The rejection is based on the apparent late arrival of the appeal fee from the SFA. We are investigating this key aspect of the matter."

Uefa's decision to ban the Belgian club, Anderlecht, from European competition for a season over alleged bribes paid to referees is illegal and could easily be overturned, a leading Belgian lawyer said yesterday.

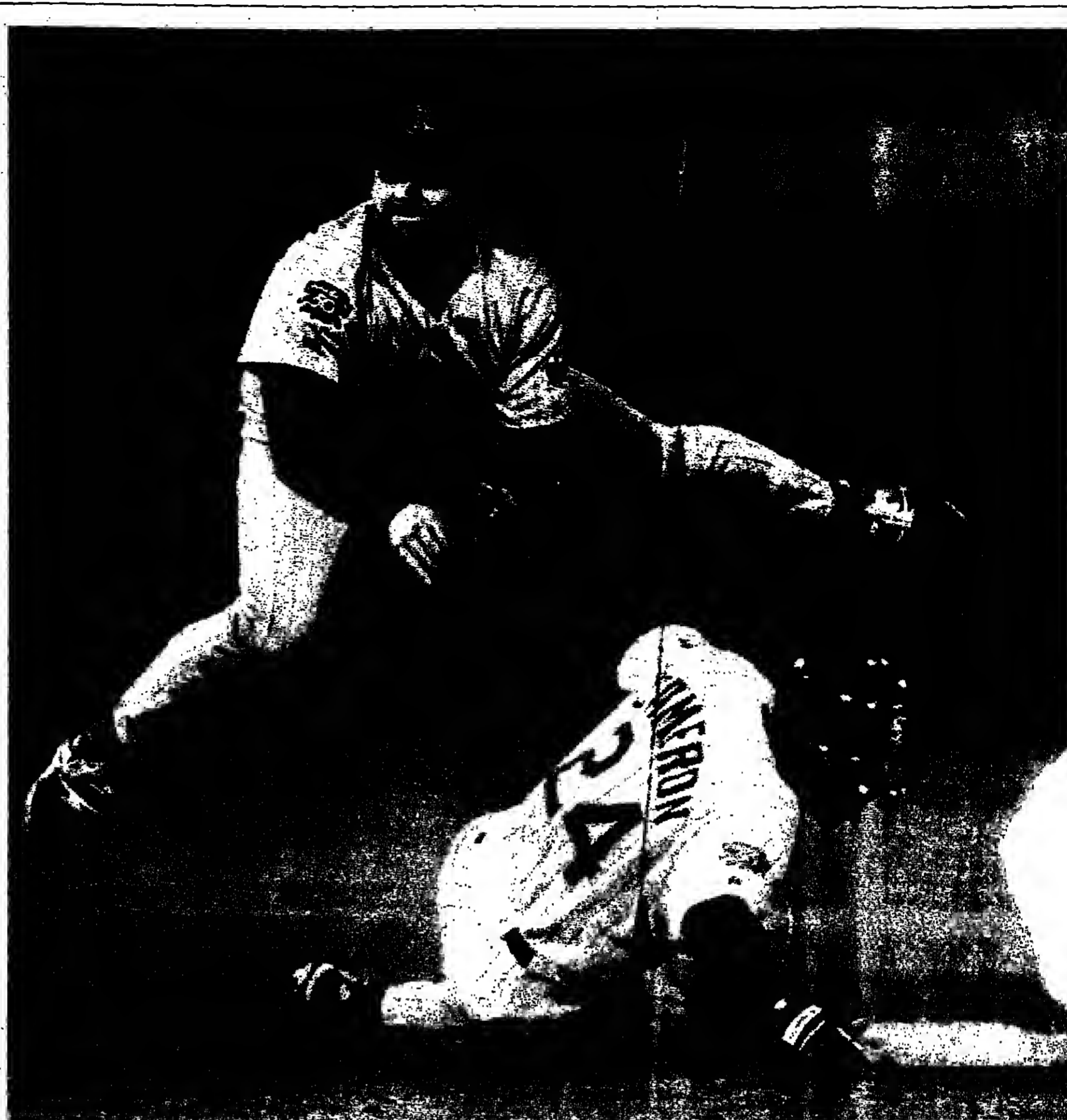
"This sanction... is so illegal, a decision so badly patched together that it only depends on Anderlecht to blow up the sanction. Uefa [European football's governing body] does not apply its own rules," Luc Misson, the lawyer who acted for Jean-Marc Bosman, the transfer system rebel, in the European Court of Justice, said.

The Brussels club have admitted paying a "loan" of about £20,000 to the Spanish referee, Gureceta Muro, who was in charge of a 1984 Uefa Cup semi-final tie against Nottingham Forest. Anderlecht will not challenge the one-year ban, though. The club's lawyer, Daniel Spreitels, said: "At the moment there is no question of taking Uefa to court."

Manchester City's former midfielder Colin Bell is suing his old club over his sacking during the summer. He was dismissed as joint youth development officer along with Terry Farrell in a Maine Road end-of-season purge which also saw another former player and the club's youth team manager, Neil McNab, relieved of his duties.

Sir Bobby Charlton is set to celebrate his 60th birthday next month by playing for a local amateur team in Manchester. The former Manchester United and England player has agreed to play for the Moss Side-based side Moss Amateurs against Tintwistle Villa on his birthday, 11 October.

Moss Amateurs are a well-respected team in the Manchester area and Sir Bobby made his pledge when he met their manager, Billy Hughes, at a reception last year.



Chuck Knoblauch, the Minnesota Twins' second baseman, goes airborne to claim the first half of a double play against Chicago White Sox's Mike Cameron

Photograph: AP

## BASEBALL

## Seattle's Buhner better than Baltimore home-run record

Seattle broke the record for most home runs by a team in one season on Tuesday night when Jay Buhner struck the 258th and his 40th, a 484-foot power drive against Anaheim.

The Mariners broke the record last year by Baltimore. Seattle had equalled the Orioles' 1996 mark when Ken Griffey Jr hit his 55th in Oakland on Monday. With his three-run drive in the first off Allen Watson, Buhner became the 10th player to reach

40 in three consecutive seasons, the first since Frank Howard in 1968-70. Buhner hit a career-best 44 homers last season after getting 40 in 1995.

The Cleveland Indians clinched their third successive American League Central Division title with a stunning comeback from a seven-run deficit, defeating the New York Yankees 10-9 in the bottom of the ninth inning. Trailing 9-2 in the sixth, the Indians scored four in the

sixth, two in the eighth and two in the ninth inning.

Twenty minutes later, the second-placed Chicago White Sox lost, handing Cleveland the crown. The Indians will face the AL wild card - probably the Yankees - in next week's Division Series.

In Toronto, the Orioles moved closer to clinching the American League East with a 3-2 victory over the Blue Jays. Nerio Rodriguez, mak-

ing his second start of the season, allowed two runs and two hits in 5 1/3 innings. Arthur Rhodes and Armando Benitez combined to allow one hit in 2 2/3 innings and Randy Myers struck out one in a perfect ninth for his 44th save in 45 opportunities.

In Chicago, Brent Breda snapped a fifth-inning tie with a two-run homer as the Minnesota Twins earned a 5-3 victory over the White Sox, who were officially eliminated

from the play-off race. Denny Hocking walked to lead off the fifth and one out later, Breda hit his third homer of the season and a 5-3 lead.

"Cleveland played their best ball down the stretch and they earned their division win," the White Sox first baseman, Frank Thomas, said.

He provided Chicago's offense with a three-run homer in the third inning, his 34th. That was his only hit, but his .352 average still leads the AL.

## SPORTING DIGEST

**Baseball**  
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Oakland 9, Tampa 14; Milwaukee 7, Kansas City 4 (over game); Cleveland 2, Kansas City 5 (second game); Cleveland 9, New York Yankees 3; Detroit 3, Boston 1; Toronto 2, Chicago White Sox 3; Minnesota 6, Seattle 4; Anaheim 11, St. Louis 2.

**Baseball**  
TUESDAY'S LATE RESULTS: European Cup Group 2: Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (1st); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (2nd); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (3rd); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (4th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (5th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (6th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (7th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (8th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (9th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (10th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (11th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (12th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (13th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (14th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (15th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (16th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (17th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (18th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (19th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (20th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (21st); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (22nd); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (23rd); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (24th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (25th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (26th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (27th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (28th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (29th); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (30th); Celtic 10, Aberdeen 0 (31st); Rangers 10, Hibernian 0 (32nd); 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## FOOTBALL

### Keegan back as Fayed's Fulham aim for the top

Kevin Keegan, Newcastle United's erstwhile manager, will return to football today by becoming the chief executive of Second Division Fulham.

Guy Hodgson reveals how the persuasive powers of the club's millionaire owner, Mohamed Al Fayed, and the promise of a large budget for new players proved irresistible.

In the press conference at his opening match as Newcastle United's manager, Kevin Keegan prefaced his comments with: "This is the first letter of the first word of the title of the book." A new chapter will begin today when he becomes chief executive of Fulham.

Yesterday the Second Division club on the bank of the River Thames were being coy about the move, but the lack of a manager was the only pertinent. "We are on press spec-

Gibb, a "When the ke any ane future of Club we will come with ation today.

old Keegan, who ie in January and impression of leav- for good, has suc- the persuasion of s multi-millionaire own- named Al Fayed who is un- stood to be willing to bankroll substantial spending spree in an attempt to realise his dream of making Fulham "the Manchester United of the south".

There is a long way to go - Fulham are 11th in the Second Division - and the price will include the appointment of Ray Wilkins. Keegan's former England team-mate. He will be installed as the new manager over the head of Micky Adams, who, on a shoestring, steered the club to promotion last term.

Adams' future at the club looked bleak last night when he failed to arrive with his team for the Coca-Cola Cup tie at Wolves.

Keegan became known as "the messiah" by Newcastle supporters after he had taken the club from one brink (going into the then Third Division) to another (the Premiership title). His departure eight months ago shocked football generally, but Tyneside was reduced to a state of near mourning. "It was my decision and my decision alone to resign," he said. "I feel I have taken the club as far as I can."

At the time it was felt that the financial binds imposed on him by Newcastle's impending stock market flotation was the reason behind his departure and it is ironic that he will return at the behest of the Harrods owner better known in City circles than football until he bought Fulham for £30m four months ago.

Keegan had repeatedly insisted he had no interest in returning to football, but last Friday he publicly admitted for the first time that he might come back if the right opportunity presented itself.

The challenge at Craven Cottage, at a club who have never won a major honour and who were last in England's top division 28 years ago, looks to have proved irresistible given the millions he will have to spend.

The chance to take the less up-front role of chief executive will also have appealed. Bright, witty and accessible to the press at the start of his time at Newcastle he had become tetchy to the point of becoming almost monosyllabic towards the end of his time on Tyneside.

Wilkins, a former England captain and now coach at Crystal Palace, will almost certainly be itching to get another chance in management after a difficult time a few miles away at Queen's Park Rangers.

"If any manager's job was offered, I would discuss my position with Steve Coppell [the Palace manager]," Wilkins said yesterday. "All I can say is that as far as today is concerned I'm at Crystal Palace."



Feeling the pressure: Kevin Keegan on the day he announced his departure from Newcastle last January

Photograph: Mike Scott/North News

### Tyneside sees former messiah take on Craven image

News that Kevin Keegan, regarded by Newcastle United fans as the messiah, should apparently be interested in returning to football with Fulham, albeit in an executive role, was greeted with some surprise on Tyneside, as Simon Turnbull discovered.

When Everton paid a yuletide visit to St James' Park the season before last, those of us passing the Strawberry pub were handed a leaflet on behalf of the Welbeck Road Evangelical Church in Newcastle. It posed the question: "Is Kevin Keegan the Messiah?"

It did so in all seriousness, too, feeling the need to inform the congregation of St James'. "Kevin Keegan may be Newcastle United's saviour but he is NOT God."

It was clear last night that Tyneside had got the message. It was not merely that the one-time messiah was about to assume a new Craven image. Eight months have passed since his mourned departure. Tyneside has simply learned to live without him.

The Talk of the Town was as much of the match in hand, and of beating Barcelona, as of Keegan's return to football. The *Evening Chronicle* led the front page with the story, but BBC Radio Newcastle ranked it No 5 on its lunchtime bulletin, behind a Northumberland man caught snatching eggs.

The local radio station did, however, catch up with one man who has been idolized - if not deified - at St James' and who has succeeded in making Fulham Football Club something of a thriving Cottage industry.

Malcolm Macdonald, in fact, was the last manager to lead Fulham out of the bottom two divisions. "The club is sitting there waiting to be totally revitalised," he said. "I couldn't see Mohamed Al Fayed buying a small club to stay small."

Going back to the managerial days of Macdonald, in October 1982, it was at St James' Park that Fulham gained probably the most recent of their famous victories. Gordon Davies clipped the Magpies' wings in a 4-1 victory featured on *Match of the Day*. Keegan scored Newcastle's consolation goal.

He promised in those days that he would end his playing days by the banks of the Tyne and, true to his word, when he retired two years later it was to head for the golf course. After returning in 1992, Keegan always maintained he would never manage another club, not even Liverpool. There was not a little surprise on Tyneside that he had, apparently, chosen to take the reins of Fulham, albeit in an executive role.

"I must admit I didn't expect to see him back in football so quickly," Mark Jensen said outside the Strawberry, where he sells his fanzine, *The Mag*. "When he left here the reason given was that he was drained by football. It does seem a bit premature but I'm sure everyone here wishes him well."

Not quite everyone perhaps.

When it was confirmed last week that Keegan's forthcoming autobiography would not be stocked at any of Newcastle's club shops, a spokesman was quoted as pointing out that "the author" was no longer employed by the club.

Mr G Smith, of Winlaton, writing to the *Newcastle Journal*, described the terse reference as "offensive, a disgrace and beyond belief." Saying that if the club did not recognise the achievement of taking Newcastle from a joke club to one of international reputation, "there are tens of thousands who will correct that view."

That view - Tyneside's reflective vision of the old messiah - may be in for more revision. Kevin Keegan's *My Autobiography* is expected to hit the band that once fed.

## GOLF: RYDER CUP

### Dejected Martin opts to go home

With one final poignant twist, the Miguel Angel Martin affair was laid to rest at Valderrama yesterday. A sad and dejected Martin decided to return home to Madrid, having come to the conclusion that being a non-playing 13th player on a team of 12 was not on.

After reading a statement in which he thanked the players and Tournament Committee of the European Tour, the Spanish PGA, and the media for their support, and wished Seve Ballesteros "all the success he deserves as captain of the European team", Martin suddenly said he had something to add.

He said: "I've come to Valderrama because I was invited to come by the Committee. But I'm leaving today because I don't feel like staying here for the Ryder Cup. I just don't feel the way I would in other circumstances. I'm sorry for everything that's happened and I'm going to go home."

A look of shock came over Ken Schofield, the executive director of the European Tour, who had just read a statement saying: "Miguel Angel has been invited to attend the matches and related events in the capacity of non-playing member, and he has welcomed the chance to play this role."

Martin stayed at the team hotel on Tuesday night, but did not go to the official welcome dinner. At a photocall yesterday morning, two photos of the European team were taken, one with and one without the Spaniard.

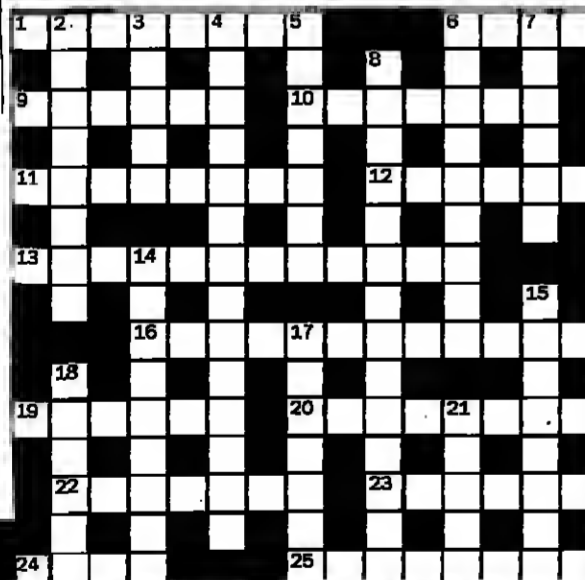
Schofield said no extra compensation was being given to Martin, who qualified for the team but was dropped because of an injured wrist. But he would receive his ranking as a Ryder Cup player - which should gain him an exemption for the Open - and the £3,500 expenses.

● The two captains, Seve Ballesteros and Tom Watson, instructed their players not to sign autographs at the gala dinner. *Fury's task, page 30*

## THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3413, Thursday 25 September

By Mass



Wednesday's solution

DOWN  
1. Like a master veering, making for island (4)  
2. Book page in Sunday Review? (6)  
3. Wrong extract from speech (7)  
4. Advise of account, outdated (8)  
5. RA type depicting arm on Tyneside river? (6)  
6. Grief at error? Criminal gets the cooler (12)  
7. One of the house lights, perhaps (5-7)  
8. Knight? Look out, it's a sharp piece (6)  
9. Political group, new in the main, retrogressed and closed (8)

ACROSS  
1. Call for a drop outside bar (8)  
2. Like a master veering, making for island (4)  
3. Book page in Sunday Review? (6)  
4. Wrong extract from speech (7)  
5. Advise of account, outdated (8)  
6. RA type depicting arm on Tyneside river? (6)  
7. Grief at error? Criminal gets the cooler (12)  
8. One of the house lights, perhaps (5-7)  
9. Knight? Look out, it's a sharp piece (6)  
10. Political group, new in the main, retrogressed and closed (8)

### Top clubs' television income set to reach the sky

Top English football clubs already rake in huge amounts of money from television companies but, as Keith Weir explains, the pay-per-view revolution could make today's sums look tiny.

Premiership clubs could earn over £500m from television rights to live matches in the 2003/2004 season, a study released yesterday said.

Manchester United, Newcastle United and Liverpool, the armchair fans' favourites, will be the big winners as pay-per-view coverage is introduced over the next few years, the report added.

Compiled by the sports consultancy Oliver & Ohlbaum and the business publishers Fletcher Research, the report said pay-per-view would generate some £280m annually for Premiership clubs by 2003/2004. Clubs would earn a further

£240m from the continuation of a subscription service offering a package of 60 live games per season. That compares with the £135m the clubs receive from Sky Sports for such live rights this year.

By 2003/2004, around 2.5m households would be taking pay-per-view. This could boost Sky's profits by £100m annually, the report said.

Sky, which now has six million subscribers, is expected to develop pay-per-view coverage as part of its drive to get subscribers to sign up for the 200-channel digital service it plans to launch next year.

The report said 18 million people in England and Wales, a third of the population, consider themselves football fans. Seven million claimed to support Manchester United, Liverpool or Newcastle. England's big three are likely to cream off over 25 per cent of all pay television revenues by 2003/2004.

Proposals for a World Club Championship look unlikely to win backing from delegates of Uefa, the governing body of Eu-

ropean football, at a conference in Helsinki today. The idea of either an eight or 16-club world championship being held in an increasingly congested fixture list has largely met with a lukewarm response at best. The Uefa meeting, for national football authorities' presidents and general secretaries, appears set to reject the idea.

Uefa is also unwilling to commit itself to the idea, which has most support in Asia and Africa, where member countries see it as a way for clubs to earn lucrative paydays against European or South American champion clubs.

Gerhard Aigner, Uefa's general secretary, who has helped prepare today's discussion document, has also questioned when any club championship could be played. "The impetus for this has not come from Europe," he said yesterday, "and without European clubs it cannot really happen. Uefa does not think the time is right for this, but we must wait and see what the members think."

### Ravanelli could make loan move to Spurs

Tottenham have refused to confirm that they are trying to sign up Fabrizio Ravanelli on a £42,000-per-week three-month loan deal, but his agent revealed that the Italian striker's future is "24 hours" from being settled.

The Spurs manager, Gerry Francis, struggling with an injury crisis even though Chris Armstrong made his come-

back at Bolton on Tuesday and Les Ferdinand could be fit for Saturday's game against Wimbledon, said: "I never talk about other club's players." He was, though, involved in talks with Tottenham's operations manager, Daniel Sugar, the son of the club chairman, Alan Sugar, before the Bolton game.

If the unsettled Middles-

brough striker moves to London, it seems that Spurs would take on his salary in a loan spell up to Christmas and then be given an option to sign him permanently.

Pino Paglari, Ravanelli's representative, said: "I think there is something in it. I think we are about 24 hours from the outcome."

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BOMBARDIER  
BITTER

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